Wii

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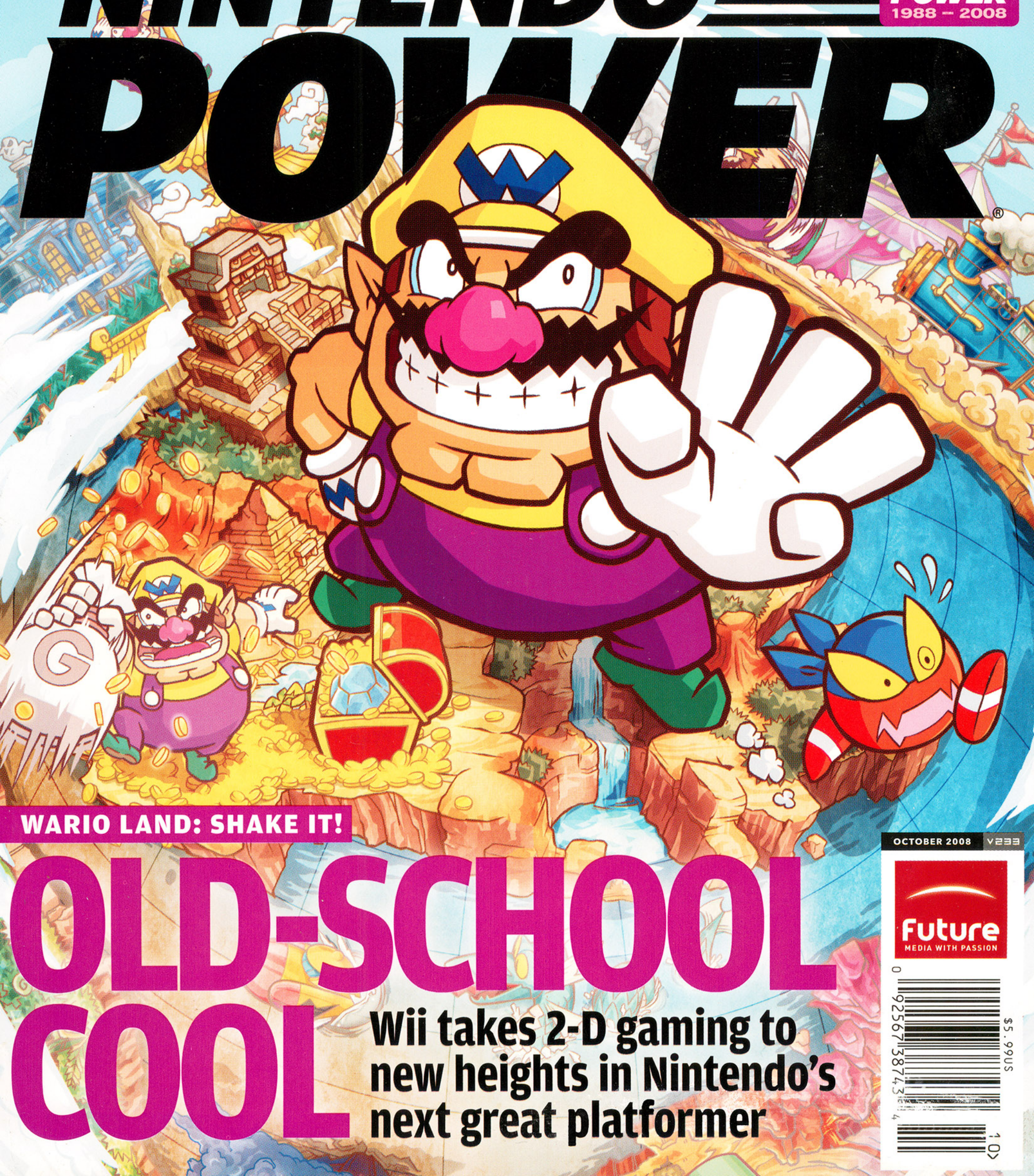

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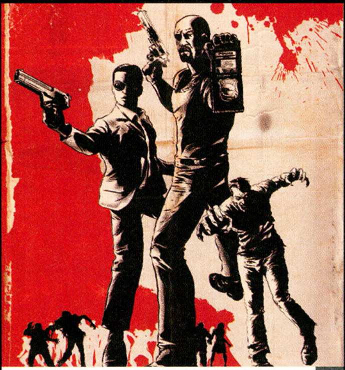

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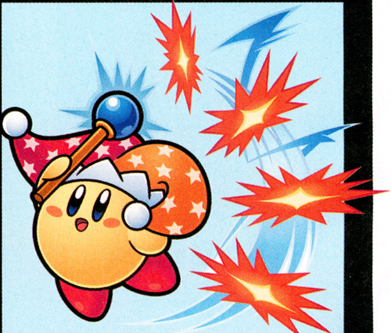

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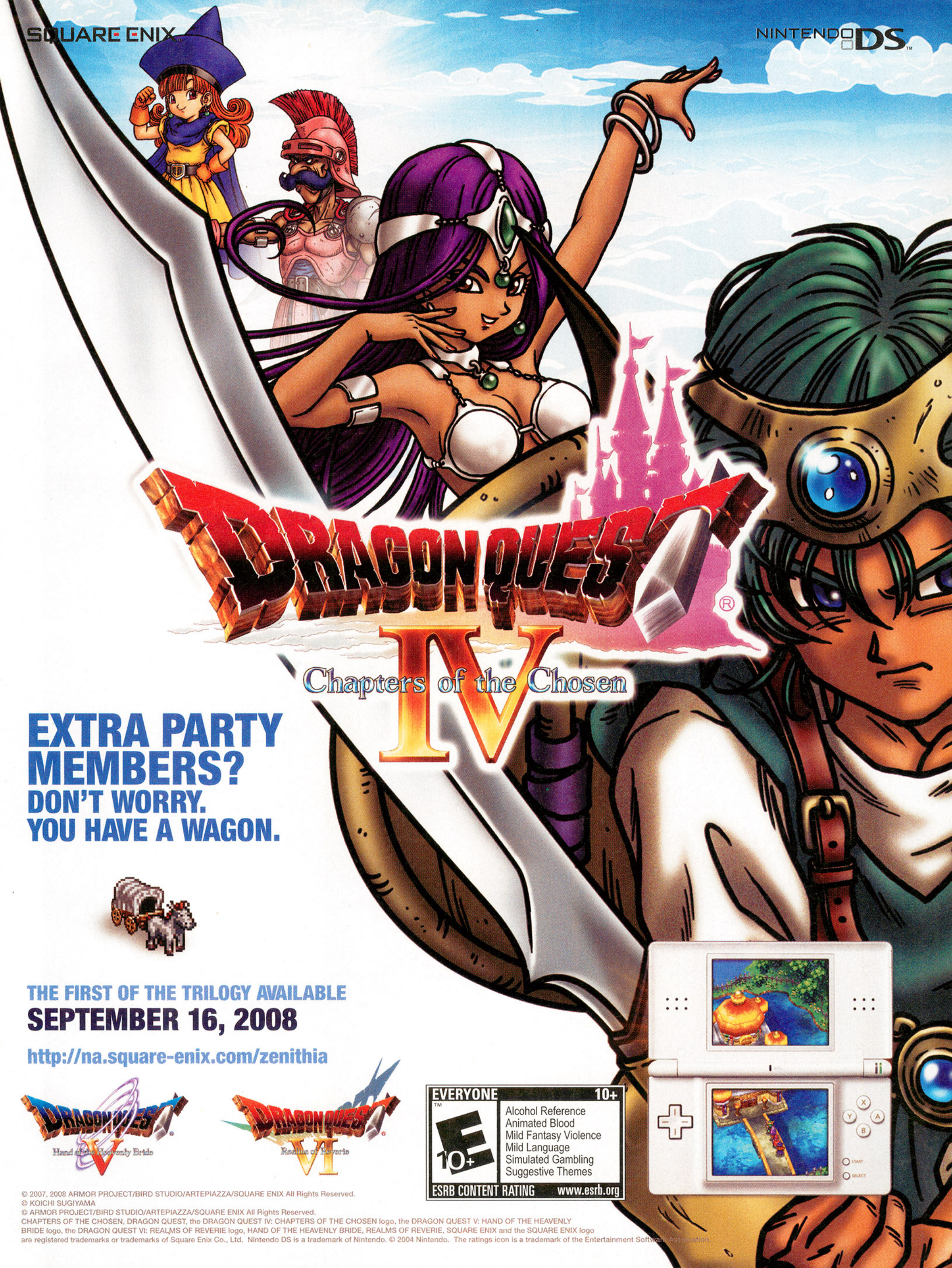
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SNES = SUPER NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM
VC = VIRTUAL CONSOLE
Wii = Wii
WW = WiiWare

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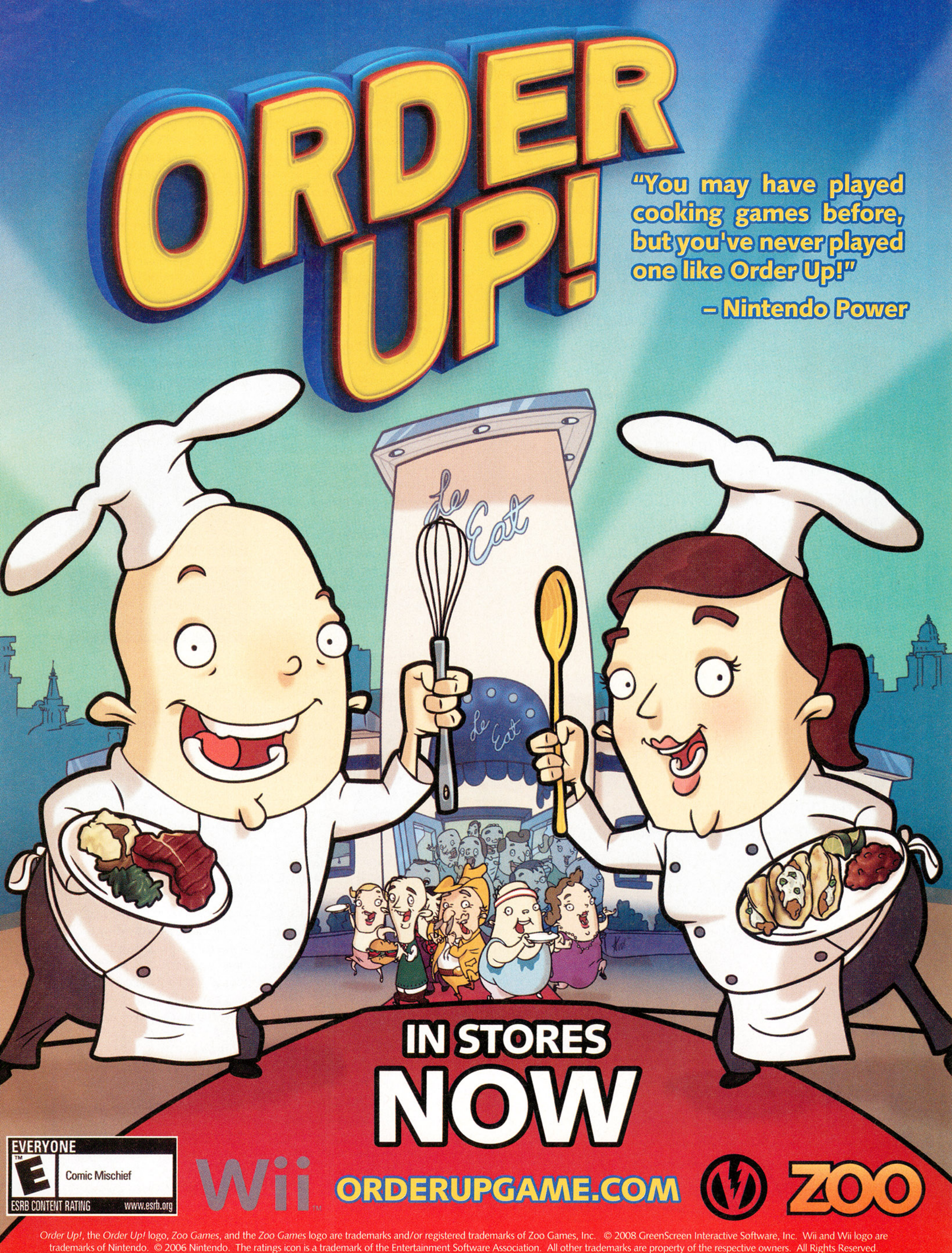
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# Pulse

## Old Made New

*As someone who is as hooked on classic games as I am on today's new blockbusters, I'm absolutely loving this new trend of mixing old-school gaming and new-school technology. Mega Man 9 merges NES-style action with WiiWare's modern download service; Wario Land: Shake It! uses Wii-powered graphics and motion controls to breathe new life into 2-D platforming; this month's featured DS title, Time Hollow, refreshes the classic PC-style adventure genre; beloved RPGs like Dragon Quest IV and Final Fantasy IV have been reimagined for DS; and even a modern-day classic like Wii Sports is set for a stunning makeover thanks to new superaccurate Wii MotionPlus controls.*

*The innovative features of the DS and Wii—and sometimes even the limitations of these systems—have pushed game creators to, well, get creative. In a market where you can't simply take last year's game and tack on HD graphics, developers have to work harder and smarter for success. This issue we spotlight the 15 Wii and DS titles that stand to do the best job of pushing gaming, and Nintendo's hardware, into bold new areas this fall and beyond. Turn to page 54 and get ready to be happy!*

**CHRIS SLATE** **EDITOR IN CHIEF**

## [LETTERS]

***July's E3 still has everyone buzzing about the games that were—and weren't—shown, and recent Nintendo Power exclusives Mega Man 9 and Sonic and the Black Knight continue to be a hot topic of discussion. This month's question: which series would you pick to get a Mega Man 9-type retro treatment? Send your opinions to the address on page 8!***

### CONFOUNDING CLUES

Why did you have to put that stupid message at the end of Volume 231?! I'm talking about this part of your Next Month page: "..fit for a king. It's got a lot of heart. Just Kidding..." I can't tell if you are kidding or not, and that message drove me wild because I'm dying for more info on Kingdom Hearts 358/2 Days. Don't lead us on another wild goose chase like your last one (the one with the moon—you know what I'm talking about!).

**HOTROD409**

***Heh, sorry, Hotrod—considering that our Next Month page is usually written at 2am on the day of our deadline, you've got to let us enjoy ourselves a little. So far, though, all of the clues we've dropped on those pages have had the simplest answers: the moon hinted at Castlevania, and the close-up of Sonic's back with the sword related to Sonic and the Black Knight. That's why we get a kick out of folks who overexamine Next Month like it's the Zapruder film. I mean, if we were going to drop a bomb as big as a new Kingdom Hearts game, we'd just tell you, right? Or...would we? Of course we would. I think.***

### VIVA LA RETRO REVOLUTION

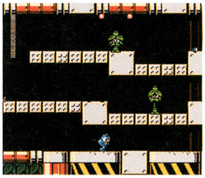
I just got a look at Mega Man 9 for Wii, and as soon as I picked my jaw up off the floor, I ran to my computer to write you guys. Looking at MM9 took me back to when games were simple but a blast to play. I wish all of the other old franchises that are still around would go back to the 8-bit style.

**TIM**

Mega Man 9—fantastic idea! Its retro design is revolutionary and should be taken further with many more new games in the style of the classics. Let me be the first to offer up the idea of another game that many fans would no doubt love to see: Super Mario Bros. 4.

**BEAKS**

***Everyone, I want you to memorize what Tim and Beaks just said, because it's the smartest thing you'll read all week. How cool would it be to get another NES-style Zelda, or a new SNES-era RPG? The possibilities are endless. Everyone buy Mega Man 9—if it's a huge success, maybe other game developers will take note!***



**For NES kids of the '80s, Capcom's new retro-style Mega Man 9 is like a time-machine trip back to your youth.**

### COUPLE QUARREL

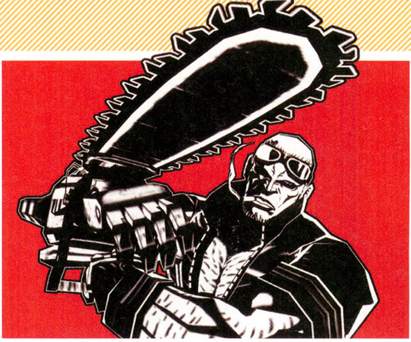
I was playing Super Smash Bros. Brawl with my boyfriend when we started to argue over the pronunciation of the Deku Nut. Granted, it's the most pointless item in Ocarina of Time, but is it pronounced "Deh-ku" or "Day-ku?" (I think it's the first.)

Ocarina of Time is my all-time favorite game. The first time I watched my brother play it back in the N64 days, it was magical. I remember seeing Zora's Domain and being amazed at how beautiful the setting was. I'm currently trying to beat the game with only three hearts since I've played through it at least five times and have everything memorized. Might as well up the challenge! Anyway, please help resolve our debate!

**LAURA O.**

***Laura, you are indeed correct: the famed nut is pronounced "Deh-ku." Coincidentally, it's a little-known fact that the "Power" in Nintendo Power is pronounced "Pow-WARRR!", with a kind of panther growl at the end. Tell your friends!***

Animal Crossing: City Folk and Wii Sports Resort took center stage at this year's E3 while Mario, Link, and Samus took a breather.



I swear that Nintendo Power is turning into Sega Visions [Sega's official magazine in the early '90s]. Volumes 231 and 232 had back-to-back Sega covers for the first time in Nintendo Power history; that's three Sega covers so far in 2008, and the year isn't over yet. (Shenmue III, anyone?)

**FEWELLJAY**

***Hey, it's a great time to be a Sega fan! After some ups and downs over the years, the company's game lineup has been getting better and better. This year's three Sega covers—Sonic Chronicles: The Dark Brotherhood, MadWorld, and Sonic and the Black Knight—highlighted three of the most promising new Wii and DS games. And if we thought giving Sega another cover could convince them to make Shenmue III, we'd certainly do it!***

## EVALUATING E3

How pumped are you about Animal Crossing: City Folk? The minute I saw the preview from E3, I immediately fell in love with it. I'm counting down the days until it comes out! What about you guys?

**AYANFE**

I've been a Nintendo fan all my life and have been greatly satisfied with every one of its consoles. At E3, though, I'm afraid that Nintendo was the only company that didn't really appeal to hardcore fans like me. I mean, half of the press conference was about Wii Music and Wii Sports Resort, with only a mere mention of Mario and Zelda. I hope to see more games for hardcore Nintendo fans.

**JEFFREY M.**

***As a hardcore gamer myself, I would have loved to see a Mario-or-Zelda-type game on stage at E3. But as Shigeru Miyamoto and other Nintendo reps said at the show, those titles—while in the works—just weren't ready to be shown. I think that's fair, considering that we've recently gotten new Zelda, Mario, Smash Bros., Mario Kart, and Metroid games—it's simply too soon to expect follow-ups. Despite what you thought of the press conference (I, like many of you who wrote in, think Animal Crossing: City Folk and Wii Sports Resort both look fantastic), there's a slew of great Wii and DS titles on the way. (Turn to our "Big 15" feature on page 54 to feel the love.)***

## BEAVERS AND BROS.

I just got back From a Portland Beavers baseball game, where, along with, "Chaaarge!" and "Let's go Beavers," the announcer played two Mario songs! In the fourth Inning, the speakers blasted the underwater theme from Super Mario Bros., and later, just after a player stole second base, the invincibility tune echoed throughout PGE Park! Do you guys think this could possibly be linked to Mario Super Sluggers for the Wii? GO BEAVERS!

**COUNT CATERPIE**

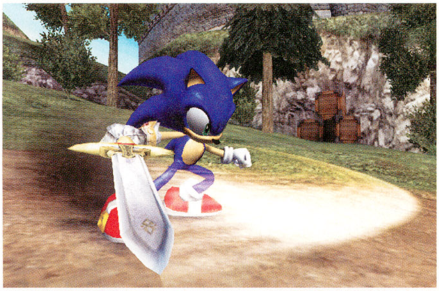
***That's pretty cool! I doubt there's a connection to Super Sluggers; I think it just goes to show how big an impact Nintendo games have had on popular culture. Consider me a new Beavers fan!***

## IS SONIC'S SLUMP REALLY OVER?

In the Pulse section in Volume 232, Chris Slate said that Sonic and the Black Knight looks to further cement the hedgehog's return to glory. What return to glory was he talking about? Did I miss it? I've played all the recent Sonic games, including Sonic and the Secret Rings (Wii), Sonic Rush Adventure (DS), and the putrid Sonic the Hedgehog (PS3/Xbox 360), and I would consider only Sonic Rush Adventure an actual playable game for more than 10 minutes. So please tell me, what is this return to glory that Chris speaks of?

**ADAM O.**

***I continue to be amazed at how polarizing Sonic is among fans—many of you simply love him or hate him. It's no secret that the hedgehog has been through rough times, but since his disastrous PS3/360 adventure, the Blue Blur has been on a roll. Sonic and the Secret Rings was at least good, if not great; Sonic Rush and Sonic Rush Adventure were excellent, Bioware's Sonic Chronicles: The Dark Brotherhood looks fantastic, and both Sonic Unleashed and Sonic and the Black Knight look promising. (Sonic's brilliant inclusion in Super Smash Bros. Brawl gave him a nice bump, too.) It seems to me that the guy has definitely earned another chance.***



249 HP
10 PP
165 HP
12 PP
194 HP
17 PP
274 HP
6 PP
150 HP

Three reasons hedgehog fans should be excited: Sonic Chronicles: The Dark Brotherhood (DS), Sonic Unleashed (Wii), and Sonic and the Black Knight (Wii). These games could erase the Blue Blur's troubled past.

## NP STAFF TATS?

I always see pictures of everyone else's Nintendo tattoos in the Pulse section, but do any of the Nintendo

Since when does a game need to be rated M to be hardcore? Twilight Princess, Metroid Prime 3, Super Smash Bros. Brawl, and Super Mario Galaxy are all deep action games that provide a challenge. Does Wii need mindlessly violent games such as MadWorld for hardcore gamers to take it seriously? I certainly hope not.

**GORON OF LIGHT**

***I wouldn't disagree with you on that point, Goron—hardcore gamers look for more than just blood and guts in their games. Of course, as much as I enjoyed every game that you listed, I'm also pumped to play MadWorld. To each their own, as they say—that's why developers make a wide variety of titles for every taste.***

Power staff have any wacky/awesome Nintendo-related tats?

**THE LOST FANATIC**

***Justin has a full-back image that works like a Mad magazine fold-in: when he pushes his shoulder blades together, it creates a full map to the Lost Woods in The Legend of Zelda. Or maybe I just made that up. You'll have to catch him at the beach to be sure!***

## YOUR FAVORITE AND LEAST FAVORITE MARIO GAMES

My favorite Mario game is Mario Kart Wii. It has an original selection of characters (including unlockable drivers like Funky Kong and Princess Rosalina), original tracks, a nice selection of retro courses, and two great battle modes. When I first played it, I came in last because I wasn't used to the Wii Wheel, but soon I got a good grip and it was awesome!

My least favorite is Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour. It's still a good game, but it can be hard and I'm not really a golf fan, anyway.

**CHRISTIAN D.**

My least favorite Mario game is Hotel Mario; it was *really* bad. (If you don't believe me, play it for yourself.) I think that Super Mario Galaxy is the best, although Mario Kart Wii might beat it.

**(NO NAME GIVEN)**

My favorite Mario game is Super Mario 64. I've lost count of the number of hours that I've put into that one over the years. It was such a deep experience, especially as a launch title for the then brand-new N64. There was always something new to discover. Even after the game was finished and I started it anew, it still felt as fresh as when I had turned it on for the first time. I love SM64 simply because it never gets stale for me.

My least favorite Mario title would be probably be any of the later Mario Party games. The series was a lot of fun in its early days, but it quickly lost its charm as each sequel relied far too heavily on gimmicks to vary things up.

**CRIMSONZEPHYR**

Super Mario World is one of my all-time favorite games. You get Yoshi and you get to whup Bowser and all of his little Koopa punks! I like all of the Mario games except for Super Mario Bros. 2; there's no one to save, so there's no point. And if Peach could kick butt in SMB2, why can't she defend herself in the rest of the games? This one just throws off the whole Mario thing!

**JBOI DA GAMEBOI**

My favorite Mario game has to be Paper Mario: The Thousand Year Door because it was so different—I especially liked the option to switch partners because I like having different abilities at hand.

My least favorite is Yoshi's Island. I have nothing against Yoshi, but it's Mario's franchise, not his. I just feel like he got a little too much of the spotlight.

**AUSTIN J**

My least favorite Mario game would have to be Mario Kart DS. I wanted much more out of it—the graphics were lacking and I expected there to be bikes.

My favorite Mario title would be Super Paper Mario for Wii—it's *so* awesome. My sisters and I once played it until 1am. With all of the fun levels, it's just what you want out of a Mario game.

**RAYMOND**

***What a diverse range of tastes! Sorry that we couldn't run all of the emails that you sent in, but they would've filled the entire issue. If I had to pick my favorite Mario game, I'd probably go with Super Mario World…or Super Mario Galaxy, depending on what day it was. It's too hard to choose!***

### PLEASE WRITE US

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Understand that we are separate from Nintendo; we don't make the games.

You don't need to send us links to game coverage on the Web—trust us; we see it all.

There's no need to ask about the status of upcoming games; we'll always pass along any updates as soon as we get them.

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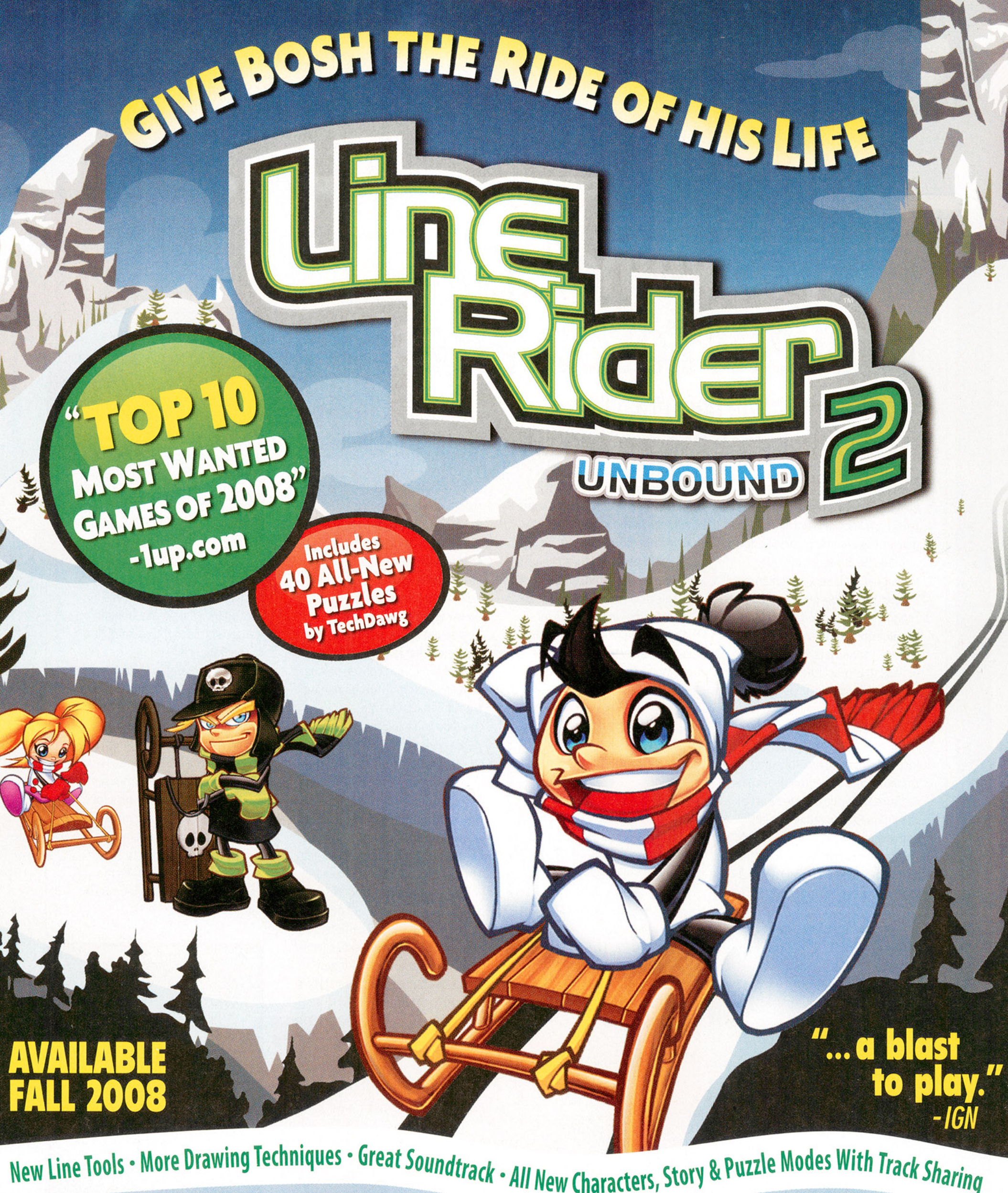

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A NEW FRONTIER

VOMIT WITH EXCITEMENT

# Only Pokémon Can Prevent Forest Fires!

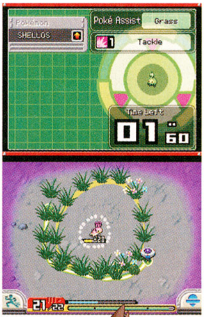
Wrangle up some new Pokémon and explore an all-new region in Pokémon Ranger: Shadows of Almia for DS.

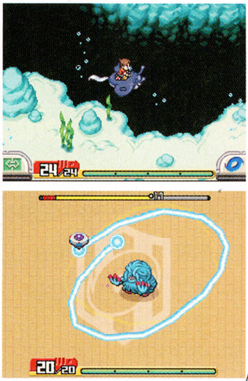
**For Pokémon fans** seeking an action-packed spin on their favorite franchise, Nintendo will deliver Pokémon Ranger: Shadows of Almia for Nintendo DS this November. This second Pokémon Ranger title takes place in a bigger region—Almia is filled with plenty of wilderness in the forms of forests, mountains, deserts, and oceans to protect and patrol—with more Missions than in its 2006 predecessor, plus new Quests. The even bigger news is that it features hundreds of Pokémon, including many from Pokémon Diamond and Pokémon Pearl. The Capture Styler lies at the heart of the uniquely appealing Ranger experience: rapidly circling a wild Pokémon with the DS stylus allows you to befriend it so you can add it to your team temporarily. Each Pokémon has a special ability that can help you overcome some challenge in the game, such as putting out a fire that's blocking your path, but since these helpful creatures are *wild* Pokémon, catch and release is the order of the day.

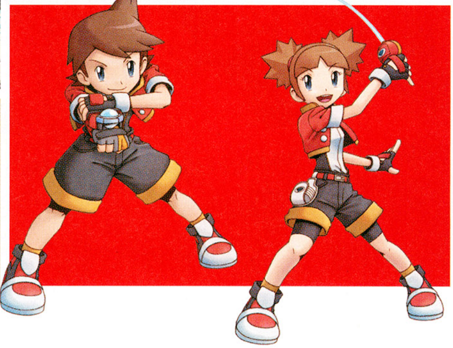
A welcome refinement over the original Pokémon Ranger is that you can select your Partner Pokémon at the outset of the adventure, and over the course of the game you'll acquire additional Pokémon (one from each of the 17 Pokémon types and each boasting some special ability) that you can establish as your partner at any time, giving you unprecedented new ways to deal with the challenges you'll face. Unlike the wild Pokémon that join you for only a limited time, your chosen partner remains your faithful companion through thick and thin.

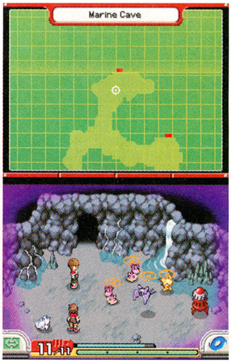
While you explore the vast Almia region and help people, Pokémon, and even nature, you'll rely on friendly Pokémon at every turn. Pokémon team members can use Field Moves to clear obstacles (as well as perform other helpful tasks), and their Poké Assists help you capture additional Pokémon. Mission goals range from rescuing folks lost in the woods to delivering packages, and by completing Quests you'll earn upgrades (which provide greater energy or new functions for your Capture Styler) from the Ranger Union as you ascend the ranks from Student Ranger status to the coveted title of Top Ranger.

Pokémon Ranger: Shadows of Almia was designed specifically for Nintendo DS, and like its predecessor, it combines stylus-based action and story-driven depth for an experience Pokémon fans won't want to miss. The title promises a completely new adventure for those who have already played the original Pokémon Ranger, and a great alternative to the traditional RPG format and the Pokémon Mystery Dungeon series. **—SCOTT P.**



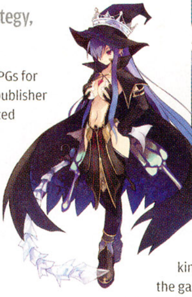


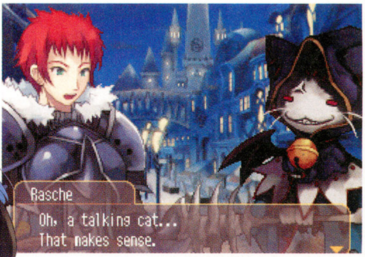




# An Illuminating Sequel

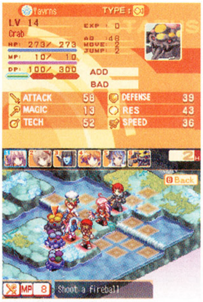
Atlus brings **Luminous Arc 2** to DS with more strategy, more witches, and a bonus soundtrack CD.





Rasche
Oh, a talking cat...
That makes sense.

**With its traditional** strategic grid-based gameplay, deep story, and memorable characters, last year's Luminous Arc provided DS owners with one of the best original tactical RPGs for the system. Now publisher Atlus has announced that the sequel is on its way to North America, featuring the same core elements that made the original game a success, but adding plentiful improvements.

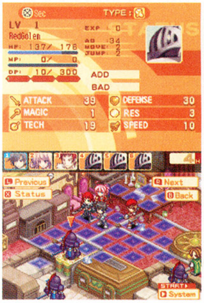


Yayrns TYPE :
LV 14
Crab
EXP : 0
AG :48
MOVE: 2
JUMP: 2
HP: 273/ 273
MP: 10/ 10
DP: 100/ 300
ADD
BAD
ATTACK 58
MAGIC 13
TECH 52
DEFENSE 39
RES 43
SPEED 36
MP 8 Shoot a fireball

Although Luminous Arc 2 doesn't pick up directly where the first game left off, it is set in the same world, features some of the same characters, and centers around the same subject matter—evil witches causing trouble for an apparently otherwise-peaceful kingdom. Specifically, the game takes place in the Kingdom of Carnava, where a once-docile witch named Fatima has rebelled and thrown the country into chaos by initiating a war known as the Witch Conflict. This is where you come in—as Roland, a young squire who obtains special powers, it's up to you and your party to restore peace over the course of 30 chapters and more than 30 hours of gameplay.

Atlus promises that Luminous Arc 2 will feature numerous enhancements over its predecessor, including an improved interface, better touch-screen controls, and a more-challenging difficulty level. Yasunori Mitsuda's (of Chrono Trigger fame) Procyon Studio is back on board to compose another rousing soundtrack, and Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection online battles will keep you playing even after you've seen the game's multiple endings. Oh, and those wacky Kopin intermissions are back, too.

In addition, every copy of Luminous Arc 2 comes in collector's-edition packaging that includes a soundtrack CD featuring music from the game (a first for DS in North America). Look for it in stores this November. —**CHRIS H.**



Sec TYPE :
LV 1
RedGolem
EXP : 0
AG :34
MOVE: 2
JUMP: 2
HP: 137/ 176
MP: 0/ 0
DP: 10/ 300
ADD
BAD
ATTACK 39
MAGIC 1
TECH 19
DEFENSE 30
RES 3
SPEED 10

Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection
NINTENDO DS
Luminous Arc 2
RP
Music CD Included
ATLUS
Luminous Arc 2
Selected Instrumental Tracks
DISC

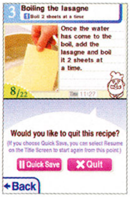
# Back to the Big One

The greatest generation goes on display once again with **Call of Duty: World at War** from Activision.

**After a brief foray** into modern warfare, the Call of Duty franchise delves back into the battles of World War II with Call of Duty: World at War for Wii. The game explores some of the final important battles of WWII in both the European and Pacific theaters from the viewpoint of American marines and Russian soldiers.

By building on Call of Duty 4's technology, developer Treyarch looks to maintain the series' reputation for top-notch graphics, but the advancements go beyond just looks: new weapons such as flamethrowers and larger elements such as kamikaze attacks are just a few additions to this installment. In addition to the kinds of competitive multiplayer modes that have set the Call of Duty franchise apart from other World War II games, World at War introduces a co-op mode allowing two players to work together to execute tactical maneuvers. World at War takes the Call of Duty franchise once more into the breach this fall. —**CHRIS SH.**

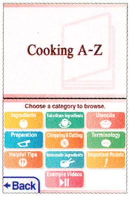
The Wii version of World at War also supports the Wii Zapper. It's nice to see that more games are making use of the peripheral.



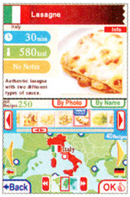
Once the water has come to the boil, add the lasagne and boil it 2 sheets at a time.

Would you like to quit this recipe?

(If you choose Quick Save, you can select Resume on the Title Screen to start again from this point.)



Choose a category to browse.

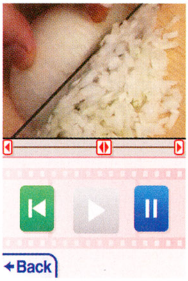


Authentic lasagne with two different types of sauce.

# Turkey à la DS

## Nintendo's megahit digital cookbook is coming stateside just in time for Thanksgiving dinner.

**The DS culinary aid** that found its way into a million Japanese kitchens is coming to North America as Cooking Guide: Can't Decide What to Eat? (That's a working title, by the way.) Cooking Guide isn't merely a cookbook with more than 200 recipes, but a full-on cooking tutorial complete with training videos, ingredient checklists, nutritional information, and a dozen other useful reference materials. If you don't want to get your DS dirty while you cook, you can even set it down and flip through the pages of your recipe with simple voice commands. Cooks can adjust the recipes to fit their dietary needs and desired quantities, take notes in the margins, and—best of all—find new recipe ideas by looking up whatever ingredients are lying around in the fridge. I'll just have to hope that this quarter-ton of homegrown zucchini keeps until November.... —CASEY L.

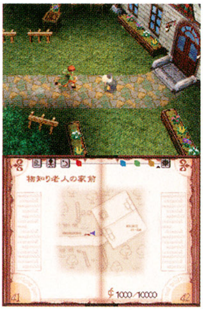


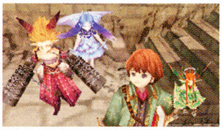
# The Prophecies Were True!

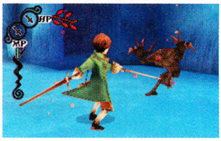
## Crack the Avalon Code to rewrite the future, one page at a time.

**After toiling for years** on the excellent remakes of Final Fantasy III and IV, the talented developers at Matrix are ready to reveal their first original DS title. It looks every bit as lovely as their games for Square Enix, but swaps the turn-based battles for real-time combat and replaces the linear RPG storytelling with a very imaginative hook.

Your hero begins the game by discovering the Book of Prophecy, an initially blank tome that can be filled with information about the world around you. That book is the only hope for re-creating the world after its impending destruction, but that doesn't mean you can't have a little fun with it. As you record data about your world you can do a little editing, weakening monsters or erasing deadly diseases from your friends, ensuring that the new world turns out a little bit more to your liking. We'll see if Matrix can pull off this very ambitious idea when publisher XSEED deciphers the Avalon Code for North American audiences in early '09. —CASEY L.





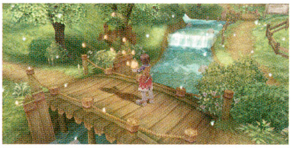


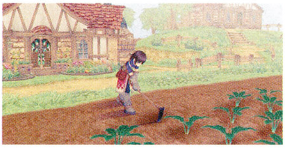
# Wii's Strange Harvest

## XSEED is prepping Rune Factory Frontier for a U.S. release, flying whales and all.

**The Rune Factory series** has grown from a Harvest Moon spin-off to a franchise of its own, offering both turnip-cultivation with a magical twist and a healthy dose of old-fashioned monster-slaying. Frontier focuses strongly on player freedom, allowing you to divide your time between farming, adventuring, and wife-hunting however you please. Those with a taste for action will find a whole island full of it, on the back of a mysterious whale that periodically flies through the sky.

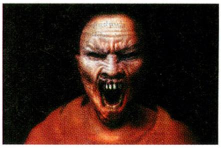
The jump from DS to Wii has, not surprisingly, brought dramatic graphical upgrades to Rune Factory, but that's not the only trick the platform has in store. You'll also be able to use the Wii remote to pantomime a wide variety of actions, from tilling the land to shaking your neighbor's hand. You'll even use it to court your lady friends, although I'm not sure I want to know *how*. Those who do can find out when Rune Factory Frontier arrives in the first quarter of the new year. —CASEY L.

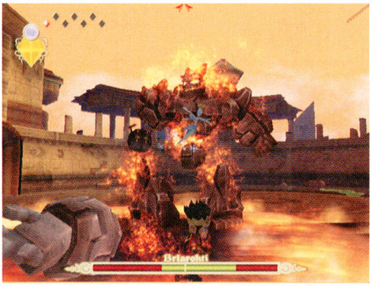




# High-altitude Horror

Deep Sliver announced that it's working on a Wii-exclusive survival horror game entitled Cursed Mountain for a 2009 release. The game will take place in the Himalayas and feature a gesture-based combat system. Check back next issue for more details.

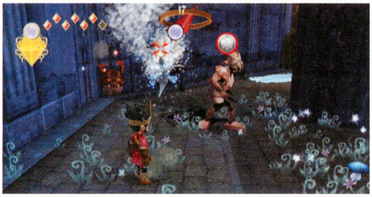


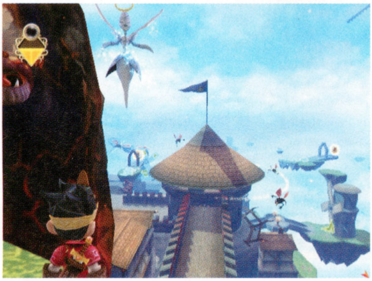


# Puke with Pleasure

Tecmo presents **SPRay**, a promising new Wii-exclusive adventure sure to make you spew.

**One of the few** surprises at this year's E3 was SPRay, an original action-platformer from Tecmo and developer EKO Software. The game stars an eccentric hero named Spirited Prince Ray who can summon a pair of liquid-squirting spirits. It's every bit as unsettling as it sounds. Among the fluids to emanate from your companions are water, oil, slime, antimatter, and of course, vomit. Your viscous repertoire is used to both combat enemies (in concert with Ray's sword) and navigate environmental puzzles. Slime lets you stick to walls and jump higher, for instance, while vomit exposes invisible platforms. (Why slime can't also serve that purpose is a question probably best left unanswered.) The Wii remote's pointer is used extensively, not only for aiming your liquids, but for lots of other little things such as drawing symbols to open certain doors. In addition to the single-player quest, Tecmo promises a bevy of multiplayer minigames. Consider us both intrigued and moderately disturbed by this holiday 2008 release. —**STEVE T.**





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Mild Cartoon Violence

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# GAME WATCH FORECAST

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Wii** | | |
| Animal Crossing: City Folk | Nintendo | WIN 08 |
| Bolt | Disney | 11/08 |
| Brave: A Warrior's Tale | SouthPeak | 9/08 |
| Brothers in Arms: Road to Hill 30 | Ubisoft | TBA |
| Call of Duty: World at War | Activision | 11/08 |
| Carnival Games Mini Golf | 2K Play | 9/08 |
| Castlevania Judgment | Konami | 11/08 |
| Catch of the Day | Electronic Arts | TBA |
| The Conduit | TBA | TBA |
| Cooking Mama World Kitchen | Majesco | 10/08 |
| Crash: Mind over Mutant | Sierra | 10/08 |
| Cursed Mountain | Deep Silver | 2009 |
| Dance Dance Revolution Hottest Party 2 | Konami | 9/08 |
| de Blob | THQ | 9/08 |
| Dead Rising: Chop Till You Drop | Capcom | WIN 08 |
| Deal or No Deal | Destination | 11/08 |
| Defendin' de Penguin | Crave | 9/08 |
| The Destiny of Zorro | Pronto Games | TBA |
| Disaster: Day of Crisis | Nintendo | TBA |
| Disney Sing It | Disney | 9/08 |
| Dokapon Kingdom | Atlus | 10/08 |
| Don King Presents: Prizefighter | Take-Two Interactive | TBA |
| Dragonology | Codemasters | 10/08 |
| FaceBreaker KO Party | Electronic Arts | 11/08 |
| FIFA 09 All-Play | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Crystal Bearers | Square Enix | TBA |
| Fishing Master World Tour | Hudson | 2009 |
| Ghostbusters: The Video Game | TBA | 2009 |
| Goosebumps Horrorland | ELASTIC | 10/08 |
| Gravity | Deep Silver | 9/08 |
| The Guinness Book of World Records | Warner Bros. | 10/08 |
| Guitar Hero World Tour | Activision | 10/08 |
| Hasbro Family Game Night | Electronic Arts | 11/08 |
| High School Musical 3: Senior Year Dance | Disney | 10/08 |
| The House of the Dead: Overkill | Sega | 2009 |
| Igor: The Game | Legacy | 9/08 |
| Indoor Sports | Konami | TBA |
| The King of Fighters Collection: The Orochi Saga | SNK Playmore | Q4 08 |
| The Legend of Spyro: Dawn of the Dragon | Sierra | 10/08 |
| LEGO Batman: The Videogame | Warner Bros. | 9/08 |
| Little King's Story | XSEED Games | 12/08 |
| Littlest Pet Shop | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Lost in Blue: Shipwrecked | Konami | 9/08 |
| MadWorld | Sega | 2009 |
| Major Minor's Majestic March | Majesco | 2009 |
| Monster Lab | Eidos | 10/08 |
| Moto GP 08 | Capcom | 11/08 |
| Mushroom Men: The Spore Wars | Gamecock | 10/08 |
| MySims Kingdom | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Naruto: Clash of Ninja Revolution 2 | Tomy/ D3Publisher | 10/08 |
| NBA Live 09 All-Play | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Neopets Puzzle Adventure | Capcom | 11/08 |
| NERF N-Strike | Electronic Arts | 11/08 |
| NHL 2K9 | 2K Sports | 9/08 |
| Onechanbara: Bikini Zombie Slayers | D3Publisher | Q1 09 |
| Pet Pals: Animal Doctor | Majesco | 10/08 |
| Pirateology | Codemasters | TBA |
| Pitfall: The Big Adventure | Activision | 9/08 |
| PopStar Guitar | XS Games | 2008 |
| The Price is Right | Ubisoft | 9/08 |
| Pro Bull Riding: Out of the Chute | Crave | 10/08 |
| Puzzle Kingdoms | Zoo Games | 2008 |
| Quantum of Solace | Activision | 11/08 |
| Rock Band 2 | MTV Games | 11/08 |
| Rock Revolution | Konami | 10/08 |
| Rubik's World | The Game Factory | 10/08 |
| Runaway: The Dream of the Turtle | Focus Home Interactive | TBA |
| Rune Factory Frontier | Marvelous Interactive | 2009 |
| Rygar: The Battle of Argus | Tecmo | 2009 |
| Samba de Amigo | Sega | 9/08 |
| Samurai Shodown Anthology | SNK Playmore | Q4 08 |
| Secret Files: Tunguska | Deep Silver | FALL 08 |
| Shaun White Snowboarding | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Sim Animals | Electronic Arts | 2009 |
| SimCity Creator | Electronic Arts | 9/08 |
| Six Flags Fun Park | Brash | 10/08 |
| Skate It | Electronic Arts | 12/08 |
| Solitaire & Mahjong | Crave | 9/08 |
| Sonic and the Black Knight | Sega | 2009 |
| Sonic Unleashed | Sega | 11/08 |
| Spider-Man: Web of Shadows | Activision | 10/08 |
| SPRay | Tecmo | 10/08 |
| Spyborgs | Capcom | 2009 |
| Star Wars The Clone Wars: Lightsaber Duels | LucasArts | 11/08 |
| Story Hour Adventures | Zoo Games | 2008 |
| Story Hour Fairy Tales | Zoo Games | 2008 |
| TNA iMPACT! | Midway | 9/08 |
| Tomb Raider: Underworld | Eidos | 11/08 |
| Ultimate Band | Disney | 11/08 |
| Wario Land: Shake It! | Nintendo | 9/08 |
| We Cheer | Namco Bandai | 9/08 |
| Wii Music | Nintendo | WIN 08 |
| Wii Sports Resort | Nintendo | SPR 09 |
| Wizardology | Codemasters | 12/08 |
| WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2009 | THQ | 11/08 |
| **NINTENDO DS** | | |
| Age of Empires: Mythologies | THQ | 11/08 |
| Avalon Code | Marvelous Interactive | Q1 09 |
| Away: Shuffle Dungeon | Majesco | Q3 08 |
| Bella Sara | Codemasters | 10/08 |
| Big Bang Mini | SouthPeak | Q4 08 |
| Bleach: Dark Souls | Sega | 10/08 |
| Blood Bowl | Focus Home Interactive | 2008 |
| Bolt | Disney | 11/08 |
| Brave: Shaman's Challenge | SouthPeak Interactive | 9/08 |
| Broken Sword | Ubisoft | 9/08 |
| Call of Duty: World at War | Activision | 11/08 |
| Castlevania: Order of Ecclesia | Konami | 10/08 |
| Catch of the Day | Electronic Arts | TBA |
| Chrono Trigger | Square Enix | 12/08 |
| Club Penguin: Elite Penguin Force | Disney | 10/08 |
| Cooking Guide: Can't Decide What to Eat? | Nintendo | 11/08 |
| Crash: Mind over Mutant | Sierra | 10/08 |
| de Blob | THQ | 2008 |
| Defendin' de Penguin | Crave | 9/08 |
| Dinosaur King | Sega | 9/08 |
| Disciples II | Strategy First | TBA |
| Disney Fairies: Tinker Bell | Disney | 10/08 |
| Don King Presents: Prizefighter | Take-Two Interactive | TBA |
| Doodle Hex | TBA | TBA |
| Dragon Quest V: Hand of the Heavenly Bride | Square Enix | TBA |
| Dragon Quest VI: Realms of Reverie | Square Enix | TBA |
| Dragonology | Codemasters | 12/08 |
| Drawn to Life: SpongeBob SquarePants Edition | THQ | 9/08 |
| Duke Nukem Trilogy: Chain Reaction | Deep Silver | 2009 |
| Duke Nukem Trilogy: Critical Mass | Deep Silver | 2009 |
| Duke Nukem Trilogy: Proving Grounds | Deep Silver | 2009 |
| Ener-G Dance Squad | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Ener-G Gym Rockets | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Ener-G Horse Riders | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Elebits: The Adventures of Kai and Zero | Konami | 11/08 |
| Exit DS | Taito | 10/08 |
| Gauntlet | Eidos | 10/08 |
| Ghostbusters: The Video Game | TBA | 2009 |
| Goosebumps Horrorland | ELASTIC | 10/08 |
| Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars | Rockstar | TBA |
| Gravity | Deep Silver | TBA |
| The Guinness Book of World Records | Warner Bros. | 10/08 |
| High School Musical 3: Senior Year | Disney | 10/08 |
| The Humans | Deep Silver | TBA |
| Igor: The Game | Legacy | 9/08 |
| Imagine Babysitters | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Imagine Fashion Designer New York | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Imagine Movie Star | Ubisoft | 2008 |
| Imagine Wedding Designer | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Infinite Space | Sega | 2009 |
| Kirby Super Star Ultra | Nintendo | 9/08 |
| KORG DS-10 | XSEED | 9/08 |
| Last King of Africa | Focus Home Interactive | TBA |
| The Legend of Kage 2 | Taito | 10/08 |
| The Legend of Spyro: Dawn of the Dragon | Sierra | 10/08 |
| LEGO Batman:The Videogame | Warner Bros. | 9/08 |
| Littlest Pet Shop: Garden | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Littlest Pet Shop: Jungle | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Littlest Pet Shop: Winter | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Lock's Quest | THQ | 9/08 |
| Luminous Arc 2 | Atlus | 11/08 |
| Master of the Monster Lair | Atlus | 10/08 |
| Metal Slug 7 | SNK Playmore | 11/08 |
| Moon | Mastiff | 11/08 |
| Mushroom Men: Rise of the Fungi | Gamecock Media Group | 10/08 |
| My SAT Coach | Ubisoft | 9/08 |
| MySims Kingdom | Electronic Arts | 10/08 |
| Naruto: Path of the Ninja 2 | Tomy | 9/08 |
| National Geographic Panda | Namco Bandai | 11/08 |
| NERF N-Strike | Electronic Arts | 11/08 |
| Neopets Puzzle Adventure | Capcom | 11/08 |
| Ninjatown | SouthPeak Interactive | 10/08 |
| Peggle | PopCap | 2008 |
| Pet Vet Down Under | Deep Silver | TBA |
| PipeMania | Empire Interactive | 9/08 |
| Pirate Battle | Orbital Media | TBA |
| Pirateology | Codemasters | TBA |
| Pokémon Ranger: Shadows of Almia | Nintendo | 11/08 |
| Populous DS | XSEED | 10/08 |
| Prey the Stars | Koei | 9/08 |
| The Price is Right | Ubisoft | 9/08 |
| Prince of Persia: The Fallen King | Ubisoft | 11/08 |
| Princess on Ice | Aksys | WIN 08 |
| Puzzle Kingdoms | Zoo Games | 2008 |
| Puzzle Quest: Galactrix | D3Publisher | 10/08 |
| Quantum of Solace | Activision | 11/08 |
| Red Bull BC One | Ignition | 9/08 |
| Rhythm Heaven | Nintendo | TBA |
| Robocalypse | Tecmo | 10/08 |
| Rock Revolution | Konami | 10/08 |
| Rubik's World | The Game Factory | 10/08 |
| Runaway: The Dream of the Turtle | Focus Home Interactive | TBA |
| Rune Factory 2: A Fantasy Harvest Moon | Natsume | 9/08 |
| Secret Files: Tunguska | Deep Silver | FALL 08 |
| Shaun the Sheep | D3Publisher | 9/08 |
| Sim Animals | Electronic Arts | 2009 |
| SimCity Creator | Electronic Arts | 9/08 |
| Six Flags Fun Park | Brash | 10/08 |
| Skate It | Electronic Arts | 12/08 |
| Sonic Chronicles: The Dark Brotherhood | Sega | 9/08 |
| Spectrobes: Beyond the Portals | Disney Interactive | 10/08 |
| Spider-Man: Web of Shadows | Activision | 10/08 |
| Spore Creatures | Electronic Arts | 9/08 |
| Star Wars The Clone Wars: Jedi Alliance | LucasArts | 11/08 |
| Tecmo Bowl: Kickoff | Tecmo | 9/08 |
| Theresia | Aksys | 10/08 |
| Time Hollow | Konami | FALL 08 |
| Tom Clancy's EndWar | Ubisoft | 10/08 |
| Tornado | Ignition | 9/08 |
| TrackMania DS | Focus Home Interactive | Q4 08 |
| Transformers Animated | Activision | 10/08 |
| Ultimate Band | Disney | 11/08 |
| Viva Piñata: Pocket Paradise | THQ | 9/08 |
| Warlords DS | Strategy First | TBA |
| What's Cooking? With Jamie Oliver | Atari | 10/08 |
| A Witch's Tale | NIS America | 10/08 |
| Wizardology | Codemasters | 12/08 |
| WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2009 | THQ | 11/08 |
| Zenses: Ocean | The Game Factory | 10/08 |
| Zenses: Rainforest | The Game Factory | 10/08 |
| Zoo Vet: Endangered Species | Legacy | 10/08 |
| Zubo | Electronic Arts | 9/08 |

RED TEXT = TITLES ADDED THIS MONTH *TENTATIVE TITLE NOTE: RELEASE DATES OFTEN CHANGE

## BITS OF TID

### Second Slice

**An Ubisoft executive confirms gaming's worst-kept secret.**

In a recent interview with gamesindustry.biz, Ubisoft executive director Alain Corre confirmed that Red Steel 2 was in the works for Wii and that it would take advantage of the Wii MotionPlus peripheral. "Red Steel 2 has been in development for many months now, and this new device will help us be even more precise in what we do with the product," said Corre.

### Activision Exorcises

**Activision Blizzard drops games from lineup.**

The new union of Activision Blizzard has announced its upcoming games lineup, and while former Sierra properties Crash and Spyro have been acquired by the conglomerate, Ghostbusters and several other titles are now in search of new publishers. Ghostbusters hasn't been canceled, but don't expect it until 2009.

### Nukem All!

**Duke Nukem returns in an all-new trilogy for DS.**

Well, we didn't see this coming—the over-the-top antics of alien-slaying, movie-quoting, manly man Duke Nukem are coming to DS. Duke Nukem Trilogy will be released in a series of three games next year, courtesy of publisher Deep Silver and the resuscitated Apogee Software.

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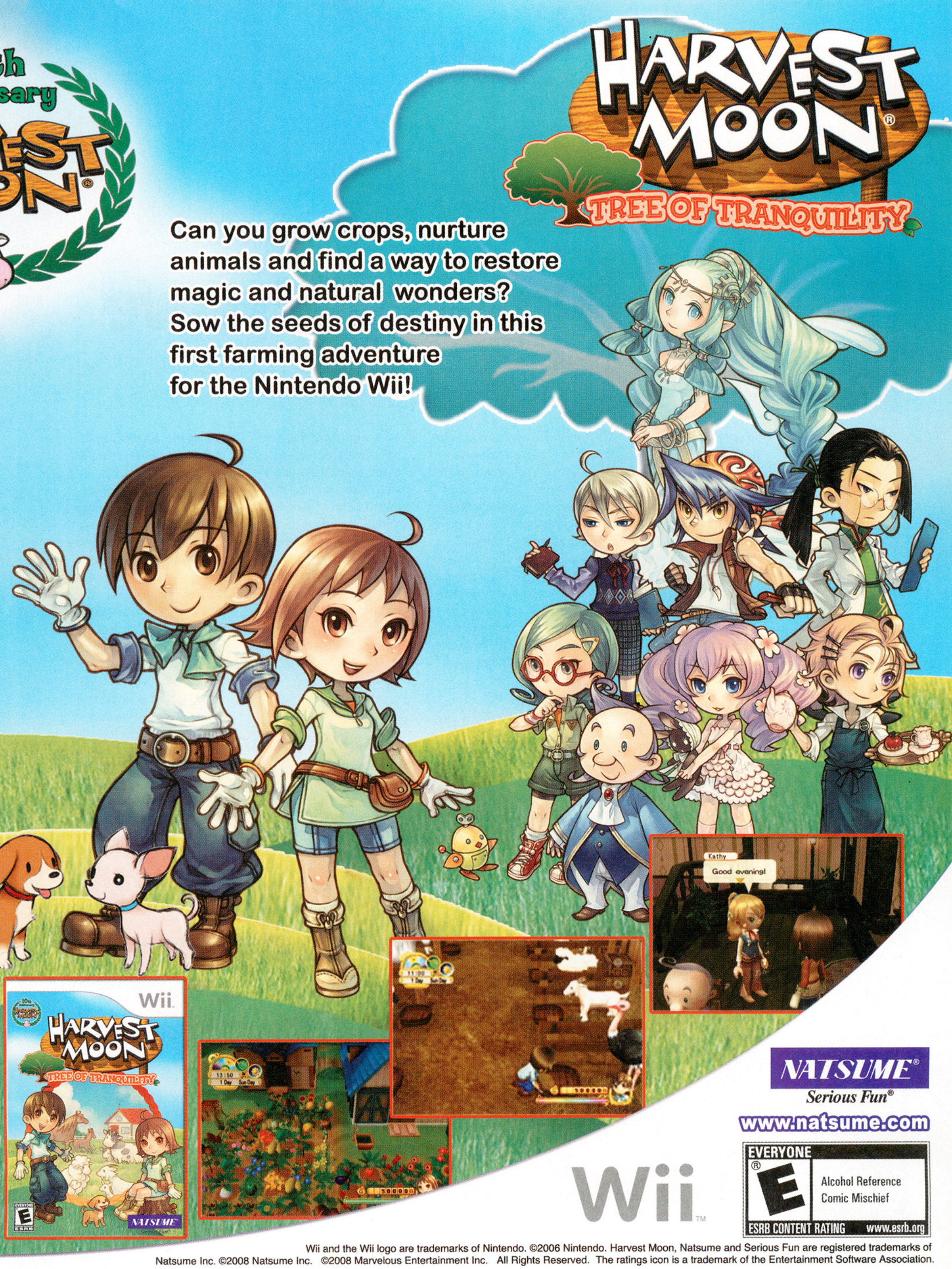
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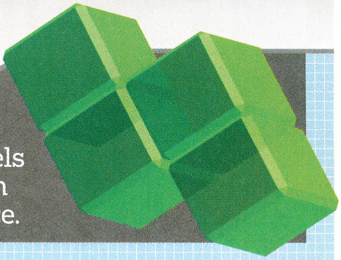
# Wii Channels



Classic favorites are the stars of this month's Channels section. Tetris is back in a big way, we've got more on Mega Man 9, and even Gradius puts in an appearance.

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WiiWARE
**Tetris Party**

INTERVIEW
**Mega Man 9's Hironobu Takeshita**

WiiWARE
**Gradius ReBirth**

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- PIRATES: THE KEY OF DREAMS
- PONG TOSS! FRAT PARTY GAMES
- SPOGS RACING

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VIRTUAL CONSOLE GAMES

- ART OF FIGHTING 2
- CHASE H.Q.
- DONKEY KONG 3
- GLEY LANCER
- KING OF THE MONSTERS
- NINJA COMMANDO
- SUPER FANTASY ZONE

# From Russia With Love

## The mother of all puzzle games, Tetris, returns on WiiWare with an unprecedented number of modes.

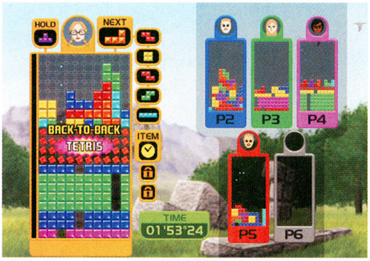
**So you think** you know Tetris? "Sure," you say—after all, the classic Russian-born, block-dropping, line-clearing puzzle game has been around for ages and is still basically the standard-bearer in the genre. But Tetris Party (coming to WiiWare this fall) is going to offer a lot more than the same old thing.

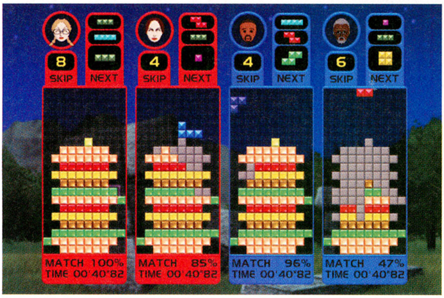
Developed by Hudson and published by Tetris Online Inc., Tetris Party features a whopping 18 modes of play. Marathon mode is your standard single-player Tetris game; you select your Mii avatar, your background, and your music (choices include several classic Tetris tunes), then use the falling blocks to create and eliminate lines through 15 increasingly difficult levels.

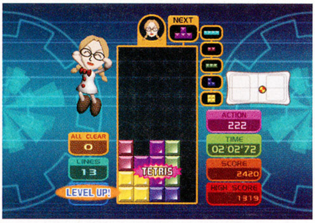
But that's just the beginning—Tetris Party features several all-new modes as well, such as Field Climber (in which you have to arrange your blocks to allow a little character to climb to the top of the playfield, collecting flags along the way), Shadow (in which you use the blocks to match the shapes of various objects, such as an apple or a hamburger), and Stage Racer (in which you must maneuver a block through an autoscrolling course without getting stuck). A beginner mode with larger, simpler blocks is also on tap, and there's even a mode that lets you control your blocks with the Wii Balance Board—you shift your weight to the left or right to move your pieces in the desired direction, squat to rotate, and shift forward or backward to drop your piece. It's crazy but it works.

Of course, you can't put the word *Party* in a title unless the game has robust multiplayer options; luckily, Tetris Party has that covered. Up to four players can compete on one Wii console (in either free-for-all or team variations) and up to six players can compete simultaneously online. Most modes are available in multiplayer variants, and you can turn on power-ups (such as smoke that blocks an opponent's view or the line-kick item that eliminates any five lines on your or an opponent's field) to add to the fun. If you'd rather make love than war, then you can opt for a co-op mode featuring an extrawide playfield.

Whether you knew Tetris before or not, Tetris Party will get you acquainted with the perennial puzzle favorite in ways you never thought of. This just might be the definitive console version of Tetris. **—CHRIS H.**







As you can tell by the icon on the screen, you can play Tetris Party with the Balance Board. Crank up the difficulty and give yourself a workout!

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Alcohol Reference
Tobacco Reference
Mild Violence
Mild Language

Wii NINTENDO DS EA

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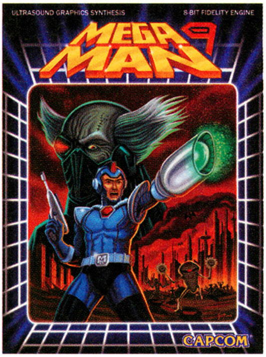
# Second Coming

Producer Hironobu Takeshita shares his thoughts on Mega Man's WiiWare rebirth.

**When Capcom unveiled** Mega Man 9—an all-new WiiWare Mega Man game created in the style of the Blue Bomber's classic NES adventures—you could practically hear the gasps of hardcore gamers around the world. For the Mega Man faithful it was a dream come true: their weapon-acquiring hero returning to his roots. And Mega Man 9 does more than look the part; it truly feels like a vintage Mega Man game, and it's got the insane difficulty level to match. (In fact, it's probably harder than any NES Mega Man release.) But that hasn't stopped us from enjoying the game. The more we play it, the more we like it, and the more eager we become for the game's fall release.

If you read our article in Vol. 231 then you already know that Mega Man creator Keiji Inafune is heavily involved in the project, but he isn't making the game alone. We recently caught up with producer Hironobu Takeshita (who was also the producer on Zack & Wiki: Quest for Barbaros' Treasure) to learn more about Mega Man 9. —CHRIS H.



Not content with just creating an NES-style game, Capcom has also created some NES-style artwork for Mega Man 9. And by NES-style art, we mean it's so intentionally bad that it's good.

**NINTENDO POWER What exactly is your role on Mega Man 9?**

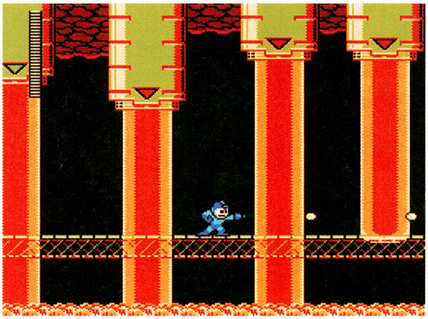
**HIRONOBU TAKESHITA** I'm the producer of Mega Man 9, so basically I'm in charge of making sure everything got done on the project, and more specifically I was tasked with making sure that Mr. Inafune's vision for making an NES-style Mega Man game was kept and realized.

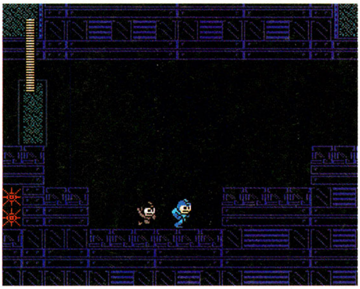
**How did the collaboration with Mr. Inafune work?**

Working with Inafune on this, his idea was to create an NES-style game. So for us, one of the first things we did was with the boss design, and Inafune would come in and show us how you could create this simple boss character—and it wasn't overly detailed or anything, but it looked really good—and he showed us how to keep it simple. He came in and told us that most of what we had was not right, wasn't appropriate to the NES style, so we had to redo at least half of it because of that. And the character movements, the animation—it was too good for an NES style, so we had to redo that as well.

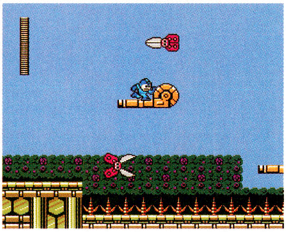
**What has your personal experience been like, as a gamer, with Mega Man?**

For me personally, what sticks out most in my mind was playing Mega Man 5 and how I just played that so much when I was younger trying to beat it. One of the bosses—I can't remember which one it was exactly, but I remember him giving me so much trouble. I had to keep trying over and over again to beat him.





From lethal lava to shadowy clones, Mega Man 9 is filled with challenging hazards.



**Was it Gyroman?**

I think it was Gyroman, but I'm not sure. I'm not sure if I can't remember it, or if my brain is choosing not to remember the trauma!

**Those old games were definitely hard. So is Mega Man 9. I think it's harder than any of the old ones! What was your approach to the difficulty?**

Our aim with Mega Man was to create something that emulates the original series, specifically 1 and 2, because those were pretty challenging. From a controls perspective it's pretty simple; it's not hard at all. The hard part comes from the levels themselves and the design of those levels. In each stage there are hints about how to get through the stage. The trick is you have to be able to find them.... So you do one stage, you die 20 times, the 21st time you finally succeed and say, "Oh, that's the way to go in this stage!"

**There are items you can buy if you get really stuck, right?**

There are some items available that will assist you in-game and help make it feel a *little* bit easier when you're playing it. Unfortunately, that's kind of a secret right now. I can't really say much about that.

**I just couldn't get past the part in Jewelman's stage where you have to get into the hole beneath the pendulum in the room full of spikes. Any pointers?**

CONTINUED ON P. 22

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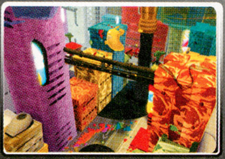
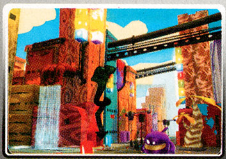


Paint the city and smash your way past Inky enemies to free your friends.

Dodge ink cannons, flatten I.N.K.T. tanks and outsmart Inky soldiers.



Compete as ink levels rise and wind cannons fire in eight multiplayer modes.

EVERYONE
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Mild Cartoon Violence
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CONTINUED FROM P. 20

Was that at the beginning of the stage or the end?

**It was the end for me! It was the second set of pendulums.**

Oh! That's pretty difficult. Actually, I haven't got past that part myself! Maybe it's not so good that I said that.

**So where did the boss concepts come from?**

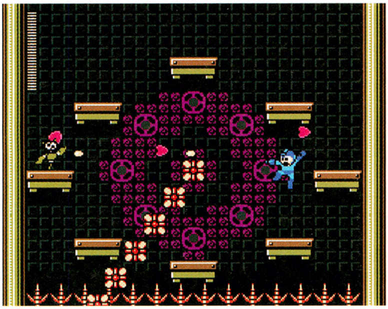
For Mega Man 9 what we did first was come up with the stage designs and think about the game world itself and what it's going to look like. Then for the eight main stages you want to think of how they're going to be different and then bosses that are appropriate for each of those stages. The key is to make each stage different and challenging in its own way so it's not repetitious. For the bosses specifically, Mr. Inafune came up with the idea of a female boss [Splashwoman]. We thought it would be kind of a surprise to the players to see this female boss.

**What can you tell me about Protoman being a playable character?**

I can't get into much detail about Protoman, but we thought about him, and he's connected to the game. You'll just have to look forward to what we have in store for you.

**Is there anything else you want to say about the game or say to Mega Man's fans?**

Mr. Inafune said, "Why are we doing an 8-bit game? Because we want to bring back that simple style of game that was fun for everyone." And I don't want people to think of it as an 8-bit-graphics game, but as an artistic style. So this game is a certain style that we want to do. And if it's successful, I hope we can do other NES-style games. That's what our hope is at Capcom, so if you want to see more games like this, we need the support of the fans!



Beds of spikes, such as this one in Hornetman's stage, are deadly to the touch. Overcoming such treacherous obstacles is part of the fun!

## A Classic Reborn

**Capcom isn't the only** company that's bringing a classic franchise to WiiWare with old-school flair. Konami of Japan recently announced that Gradius—one of the titles that helped define the side-scrolling-shooter genre—will be making the jump in the form of Gradius ReBirth. Konami hasn't revealed much about the game yet or even officially announced if it will be coming to North America (although we have a good feeling that it will), but we'll bring you more details as they become available.

—CHRIS H.

# DOWNLOAD STATION

WiiWare

### MAJOR LEAGUE EATING: THE GAME

PUBLISHER: **MASTIFF**
GENRE: **ACTION**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

Making the most out of empty calories, Mastiff's gullet-crammer has you performing face-stuffing motions with the Wii remote to simulate a dozen ways to eat. Gas-passing power-ups, a Barf-o-Meter, and a Burp-off add depth to a fairly shallow exercise. Fans will enjoy facing off against real-life gastronomical athletes, and against friends via Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. —GEORGE S.

Hmmm...

WiiWare

### PIRATES: THE KEY OF DREAMS

PUBLISHER: **OXYGEN GAMES**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

Being a pirate sounds cool, but The Key of Dreams proves that the reality is a lot less desirable. The game's controls are a mess (if you use the remote only, you must hold it sideways while pressing B to accelerate), and you can't even control the direction you fire your main cannons. Multiplayer mode isn't any better than single-player; there's little variety and less strategy. Someone should walk the plank for this. —CHRIS H.

Grumble Grumble

WiiWare

### PONG TOSS! FRAT PARTY GAMES

PUBLISHER: **JV GAMES**
GENRE: **SPORTS**
Wii POINTS: **800**

For all its early controversies, Pong Toss is pretty innocent—throwing ping-pong balls into plastic cups just can't be that improper. It takes a while to get the throwing motion down—the first few games will be frustrating until you find the right wrist action. Skip the turn-based Pong Toss mode and play Speed Pong, where both players throw simultaneously. And turn on your own tunes—the in-game music is pretty much unbearable. —CHRIS SH.

Hmmm...

WiiWare

### SPOGS RACING

PUBLISHER: **D2C GAMES**
GENRE: **RACING**
Wii POINTS: **1,000**

If you're seeking a budget kart racer, you could do a lot worse than SPOGs Racing. Against other human opponents the game is fast and competitive. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for single-player action—the game does a terrible job of keeping races competitive against CPU drivers, leaving you hanging around at the back of the pack most of the time. The system for improving your vehicles is a train wreck, too.

—CHRIS SH.

Grumble Grumble

Virtual Console

## ART OF FIGHTING 2

PLATFORM: **NEOGEO**
PUBLISHER: **D4/SNK**
GENRE: **FIGHTING**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1994**

With characters that show damage and an interesting special-move mechanic (special moves consume energy, becoming less powerful the more you use them), Art of Fighting 2 has some interesting ideas. Sadly, the actual fighting fundamentals aren't as solid as they are in other fighting games—these characters are more fun to play with in King of Fighters. —**JUSTIN C.**

Hmmm...

Virtual Console

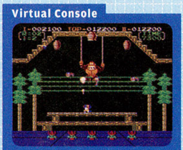
## CHASE H.Q.

PLATFORM: **TURBOGRAFX16**
PUBLISHER: **TAITO**
GENRE: **RACING**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

A pair of Crockett-and-Tubbs-esque cops race down endless stretches of road to catch fleeing criminals—it's a cool premise for a racing game, but the experience can be pretty darn frustrating. You've only got 60 seconds to chase down your target while trying to drive a sports car with poor steering while random cars, litter, road signs, and other obstacles impede your path. —**JUSTIN C.**

Grumble Grumble

Virtual Console



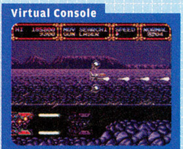
## DONKEY KONG 3

PLATFORM: **NES**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
GENRE: **ACTION**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1986**

Stanley the exterminator, the hero of Donkey Kong 3, never went on to the fame and glory of his monkey-stopping predecessor, and with good reason—his game isn't nearly as good. Running back and forth on a platform and shooting bug spray up DK's keister simply isn't as compelling as jumping and climbing to stop the big ape's shenanigans. DK3 does, however, provide an interesting bit of nostalgia. —**CHRIS H.**

Hmmm...

Virtual Console



## GLEY LANCER

PLATFORM: **GENESIS**
PUBLISHER: **NCS**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

Part of what makes this side-scrolling shooter stand out from the many others already available is the amount of customization it offers. You can choose how your two assisting gun pods operate and you can alter your ship's speed on the fly. The cinema scenes are definitely pretty, but the fact that you have to go into the Operations Guide to get the English translation is irksome. —**JUSTIN C.**

Recommended

Virtual Console

## KING OF THE MONSTERS

PLATFORM: **NEOGEO**
PUBLISHER: **D4/SNK**
GENRE: **FIGHTING**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1991**

I was a big fan of King of the Monsters as a young lad, but I evidently had horrible taste. Admittedly, giant monsters duking it out in the middle of a city is a winning concept—especially when their repertoires consist of pro-wrestling moves like backbreakers and elbow drops—but the controls are so clunky and the action so simplistic that the novelty wears off quickly. —**STEVE T.**

Grumble Grumble

Virtual Console

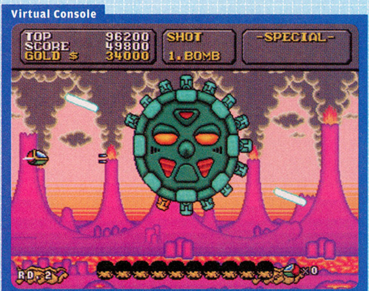
## NINJA COMMANDO

PLATFORM: **NEOGEO**
PUBLISHER: **D4/SNK**
GENRE: **SHOOTER**
ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

You've got ninjas; you've got commandos. How can you possibly go wrong? Not easily—just ask G.I. Joe's Snake Eyes. Although Ninja Commando's time-traveling plot is decidedly goofy, the co-op character-driven shooting is exciting, intense, and pretty darn challenging. Get ready to mash some buttons, though—the faster you fire, the greater your attack power. —**CHRIS H.**

Recommended

Virtual Console



## SUPER FANTASY ZONE

PLATFORM: **GENESIS** • PUBLISHER: **SUNSOFT**
GENRE: **SHOOTER** • ORIGINAL RELEASE: **1992**

Steve T's Pick

This 16-bit sequel to one of the Master System's best follows closely in its predecessor's pastel-colored footsteps. The core concept is the same—destroy every base in a level before taking on some bizarre boss (like a giant metal pumpkin). As expected, though, the Genesis game looks and sounds significantly better, and there's a greater selection of ship upgrades available to purchase. In a sea of look-alike shooters, Super Fantasy Zone's surreal charm truly stands out.

Recommended

## WANTED!

Earthbound remains steady as a rock in the readers' top spot as their most-wanted Virtual Console game. Their subsequent picks remained predictable as well, except for fifth place, which saw The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask overtake Chrono Trigger. Both the readers and editors have remained loyal to their picks for the last several months, so to shake things up, next issue we're going to focus on the most-wanted titles for only one system. First up: the Sega Genesis. What games do you want from the house that Sonic built?

### READERS' MOST WANTED

1. Earthbound (Super NES)
2. Mother (NES/Japan only)
3. Super Mario RPG: Legend of the Seven Stars (Super NES)
4. Super Smash Bros. (N64)
5. The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask (N64)

### NP STAFF'S MOST WANTED

1. Mega Man: The Wily Wars (Sega Genesis/Europe & Japan)
2. Castlevania: Rondo of Blood (TurboGrafx CD/Japan only)
3. Terranigma (Super NES/Europe & Japan)
4. Super Punch-Out!! (Super NES)
5. Pilotwings (Super NES)

What classic Sega Genesis games do you want to see come to Virtual Console? Send us up to five picks at **vcpoll@futureus.com**. We'll print the results in an upcoming issue. Note: This is for polling purposes only. Nintendo Power does not choose the games that appear on Virtual Console, and this poll will in no way determine future Virtual Console releases.

## THIS MONTH IN PREVIEWS

CRASH: MIND OVER MUTANT PG. 25
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MASTER OF THE MONSTER LAIR PG. 33
NARUTO: CLASH OF NINJA REVOLUTION 2 PG. 28
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SAMBA DE AMIGO PG. 24
SECRET FILES: TUNGUSKA PG. 26
TORNADO PG. 32
ULTIMATE BAND PG. 26

# Shake It Down

## >SAMBA DE AMIGO

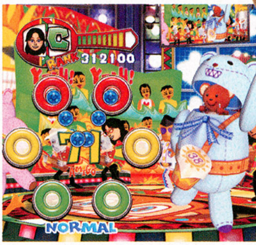
PLATFORM: **Wii** • PUBLISHER: **SEGA**
DEVELOPER: **GEARBOX** • RELEASE: **SEPTEMBER 2008**

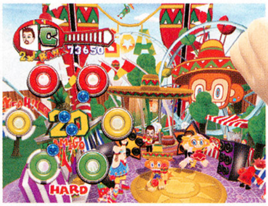
**Grab those maracas** and get rocking, because Samba de Amigo's ready to shake, rattle, and roll right into the rhythm-game hall of fame. You might've heard that eight years ago when Samba dominated the Dreamcast, but you're hearing it again because Gearbox's resurrection of the game is nearly pitch-perfect. All the good stuff from the old game is back, plus some stuff from the Japan-only sequel, Samba de Amigo Ver. 2000, as well as all-new content.

Like in the original game, you play by holding a maraca (Wii remote) in each hand and shaking them in time to music. The beats appear onscreen as little balls drifting toward high, middle, and low targets along a circle. A sharp flick of the maraca is required when a blue ball enters the target, while a line of red balls signals that you should shake the maraca continuously. Every so often a dreadlock-sporting stick figure appears in the middle of the circle and you've got to match his hand position to strike a pose. Sometimes the stick figure waves one arm between two targets and you must follow the motion with your maraca to pull off a dance move. All three game modes—Career, Single Player, and Multiplayer—make the most of the gameplay, but Hustle style is the only way to play if you want poses and dance moves thrown into the mix.

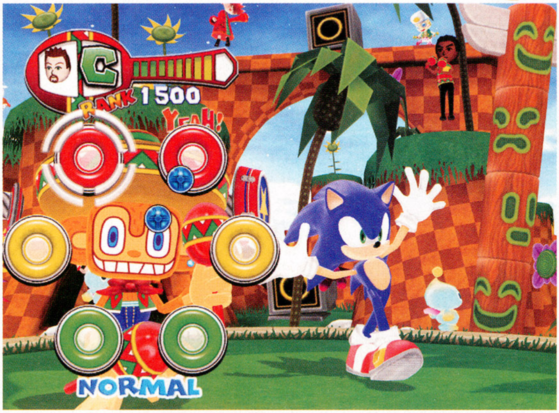
The addictive factor comes from the soundtrack. With more than 40 songs in the game and plenty of tracks promised for download, the beat won't stop at samba—there's mambo, tango, '80s hits, and "Theme from Rocky." With classic Latin chart-toppers like "Oye Como Va" and more-modern mambos like "Mambo Number 5," there's bound to be a track for everyone—even the most metal of Rock Band rockers. We especially liked a-ha's "Take On Me" and '50s song "Papa Loves Mambo" (which stuck in our heads hours after we put the game down).

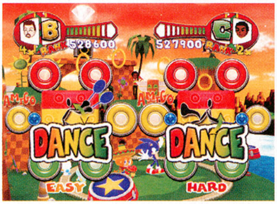
There's still a ways to go with tweaking the controls. We could have sworn we hit that high-right note with a well-timed flick, but wait—was our remote turned with the back facing the sensor bar, or the front? Which way was it supposed to be facing? Little things like that will make all the difference between a feisty fiesta and the lamest conga line ever. But so far, Samba de Amigo looks like it'll be a serious contender for a space next to Guitar Hero on your shelf. —**AMANDA G.**

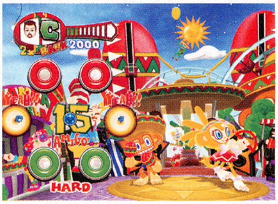




Samba's so cool, even Sonic wants in on the action!







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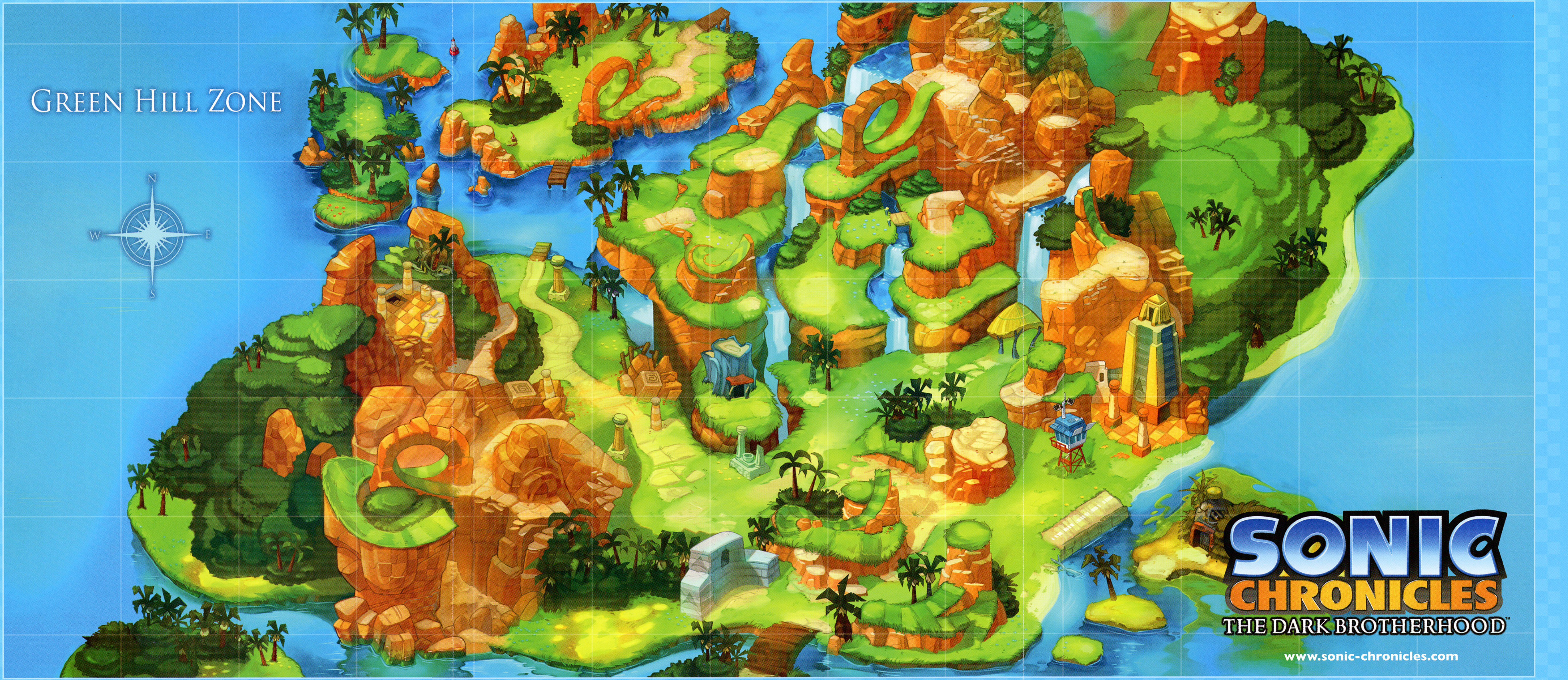
# GREEN HILL ZONE



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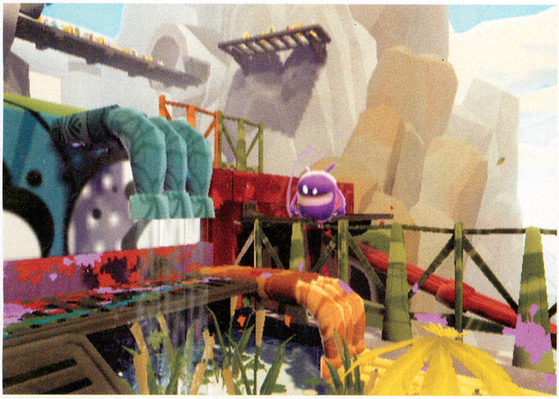
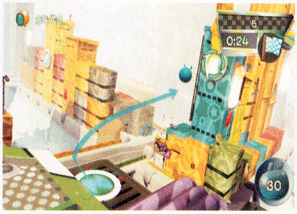




# Deviant Art

## >DE BLOB

PLATFORM: **Wii (ALSO ON DS)** • PUBLISHER: **THQ**
DEVELOPER: **BLUE TONGUE** • RELEASE: **SEPTEMBER 2008**

**When we first saw** THQ's de Blob more than a year ago, the unique, colorful action game was one of the most promising original titles for Wii. Many months later, it's still one of the most promising Wii games—only now with a lot more polish. The premise behind the game is simple: as Blob, the hero of the Color Revolution, your mission is to overthrow the evil INKT Corporation by returning color to the monochromatic world. Splattering Chroma City with paint and watching it spring to life (complete with a dynamic soundtrack that becomes richer as you add more colors) is enjoyable in and of itself, but completing a variety of missions (painting, combat, reconnaissance, and sabotage) is the key to earning points and proceeding through the game's 10 large stages. Satisfying lock-on combat, the ability to mix colors, and cool techniques such as sticking to walls add to the fun. Multiplayer enthusiasts won't be left out, either; de Blob features eight multiplayer modes for up to four players, including Blob on the Run (one player paints while the others try to stop him), and Blob Race (in which you must quickly paint buildings as they become available). **—CHRIS H.**

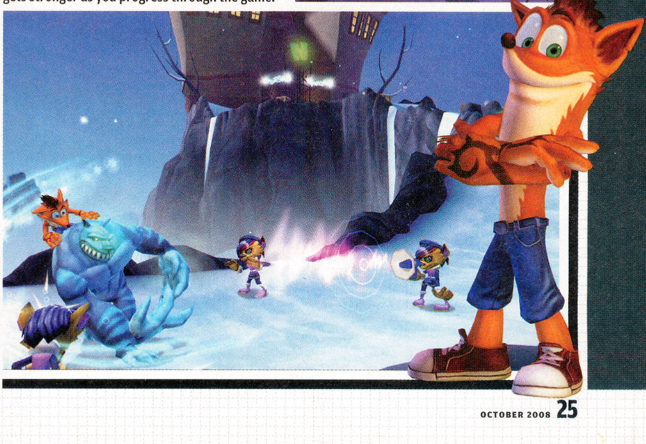
# Mental Mojo

## >CRASH: MIND OVER MUTANT

PLATFORM: **Wii (ALSO ON DS)** • PUBLISHER: **SIERRA**
DEVELOPER: **RADICAL** • RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2008**

**Crash Bandicoot's old** nemesis, Dr. Neo Cortex, is up to no good again. This time he's taking over the minds of the Wumpa Islands' inhabitants by way of the NV—an all-in-one cell phone/PDA-type device that's worn as a helmet. Even Crash's sister Coco and their burly pal Crunch fall under Cortex's spell. But as fans of the marsupial know, Crash isn't exactly helpless: he can platform with the best of them, and it's up to him to spin (accomplished by shaking the remote), double-jump, wall-run, swing, dig, and climb to free his buddies. The game also features a robust combat system, complete with easy-to-execute reversals that can confound even the toughest opponents. But just as important as Crash's own skills are those of his foes; like in his previous adventure, Crash of the Titans, our hero can monster-jack his adversaries and use their skills in combat and to solve puzzles. One beast can freeze water to create platforms, for example, while another can telekinetically throw other baddies and activate switches. With enemies like these, who needs friends? **—CHRIS H.**

Mind over Mutant is equal parts platformer and action game. Crash has numerous attacks, and he gets stronger as you progress through the game.

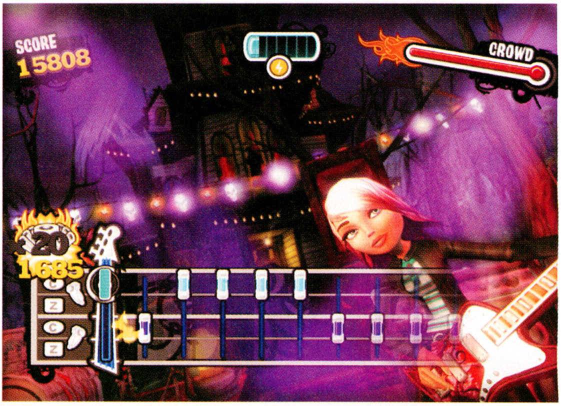


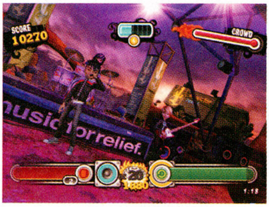
# A Band Apart

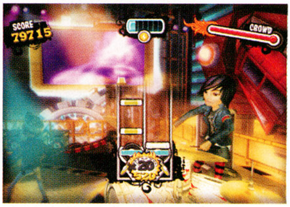
## >ULTIMATE BAND

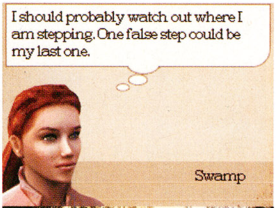
PLATFORM: **Wii (ALSO ON DS)** • PUBLISHER: **DISNEY INTERACTIVE** • DEVELOPER: **FALL LINE STUDIO**
RELEASE: **NOVEMBER 2008**

**With so many** rhythm-based music games on the market, what differentiates Ultimate Band? Aside from the four-player co-op campaign and the Flourishes (tricks that you can perform at any time during songs), the game doesn't use any peripherals: all four of the band components—guitar, bass, drums, and frontman—are controlled completely with the remote and nunchuk. To play the drums, for example, you use the remote and nunchuk like drumsticks (à la the upcoming Wii Music), trying to hit the notes as they cascade down the screen. Guitar and bass have you holding the nunchuk like the guitar's neck (pressing C or Z when appropriate) as you waggle the remote to strum. Since there's no microphone, the frontman becomes more of a dancer; you shake the remote and nunchuk to, say, pump your fist in the air. There's a DS version of Ultimate Band on the way as well, and it has interconnectivity with the Wii game: a fifth player can use the DS game to affect the lighting and add effects (smoke, flashpots, etc.) in the Wii game via local wireless. **—JUSTIN C.**

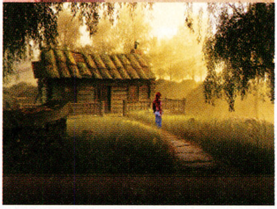


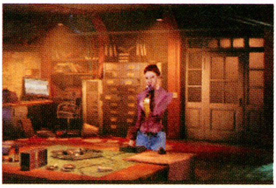


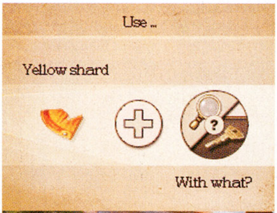


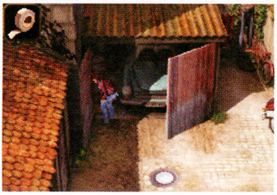


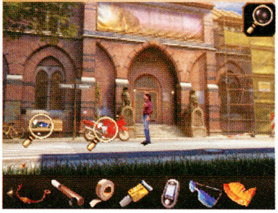
I should probably watch out where I am stepping. One false step could be my last one.









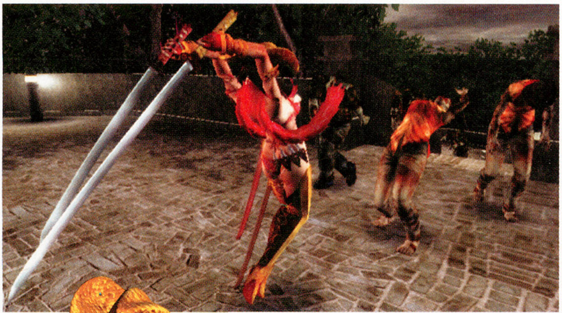


# Cold Case

## >SECRET FILES: TUNGUSKA

PLATFORM: **DS (ALSO ON Wii)** • PUBLISHER: **DEEP SILVER**
DEVELOPER: **10TACLE STUDIOS** • RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2008**

**Besides wars, few** real-life events have been the inspiration for game stories. Secret Files: Tunguska centers on an occurrence that remains a mystery a century after the fact. In 1908 an explosion leveled 6,000 square meters of forest in central Siberia. Set in the present day, the game follows heroine Nina's attempts to find her missing father, and in the bargain uncover information about the Tunguska catastrophe. Though the title's style is termed "point and click" in the PC world, you don't have to click on the DS touch screen; just point at an object that you want to investigate (identified by a magnifying-glass symbol) in any of the more that 100 environments, and you will either uncover a clue or learn how to use the object on your way to solving the mystery. As Nina and sidekick Max travel from Germany to Russia, Cuba, China, and Antarctica, the item manipulation grows increasingly complex and the plot thickens. No one knows what actually happened in Tunguska, but Secret Files will point you to one possible explanation. **—GEORGE S.**



# Samurai Hoedown

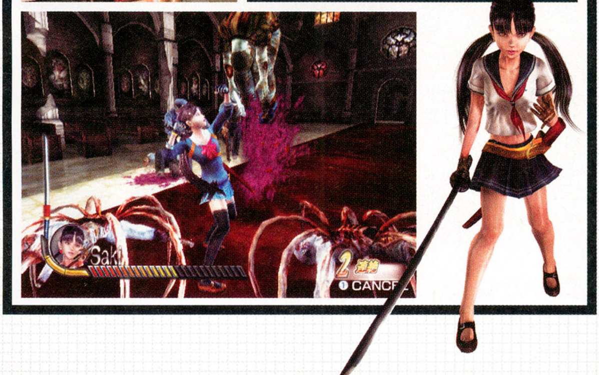
## > ONECHANBARA: BIKINI ZOMBIE SLAYERS

PLATFORM: **Wii** • PUBLISHER: **D3PUBLISHER**
DEVELOPER: **TAMSOFT** • RELEASE: **EARLY 2009**

**Onechanbara is like** the Cheerios of M-rated video games: it's got everything you need in one complete package. Zombies? Check. A bikini-clad heroine? Check. Samurai swords? Check. Gratuitous arterial spray? That's an affirmative.

As you could probably guess, the game makes no pretense of moving the medium forward or engaging the player in thoughtful storytelling. Onechanbara is unabashedly and singularly focused on delivering guilty pleasures. Cowgirl Aya and her younger sister Saki slash through swaths of the undead via the expected motion controls, covering everything onscreen in crimson goo. That includes the sisters themselves, and once they're sufficiently drenched, they go into a Rage state that allows them to dispatch zombie-killing justice with even greater fervor.

Onechanbara is part of the value-priced Simple 2000 series in Japan, and though D3Publisher has yet to settle on an exact number, the game will also carry a budget price tag in the US. **—STEVE T.**



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# Revolutionary

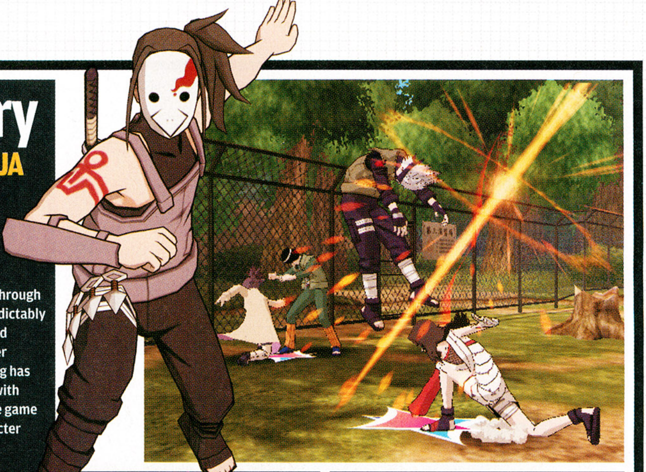
## >NARUTO: CLASH OF NINJA REVOLUTION 2

PLATFORM: **Wii** • PUBLISHER: **TOMY/ D3PUBLISHER** • DEVELOPER: **EIGHTING**
RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2008**

**The Naruto: Clash of Ninja** series has gone through a few iterations, and until now they've all predictably followed the storyline of the Naruto anime and manga. With the anime currently running filler episodes in the US, though, developer Eighting has decided to take the series in a new direction with Naruto: Clash of Ninja Revolution 2, giving the game an entirely new story and an expanded character roster that includes original characters.

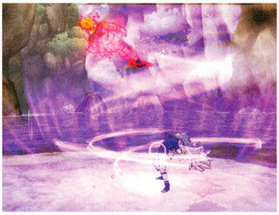
The story of Clash of Ninja Revolution 2 was written especially for this game, and focuses on the Anbu, the Hidden Leaf Village's black-ops squads that until now were mostly background characters. Set after Sasuke has left the Hidden Leaf, two Anbu agents discover a small village that's been completely destroyed, and when Naruto and his buddies are sent to investigate they uncover a plot to destroy the Hidden Leaf and must race to stop it. The story integrates nicely with that of the anime, and the Anbu make great source material. Squad leader Yugao (introduced briefly in the anime) and two new Anbu members, Towa and Komachi, feature heavily in the story, and each have unique fighting styles and abilities—Yugao is one of the fastest characters in the game, while Towa runs chakra through his tattoo to form it into various weapons and Komachi uses the senbon needles that hold up her hair.

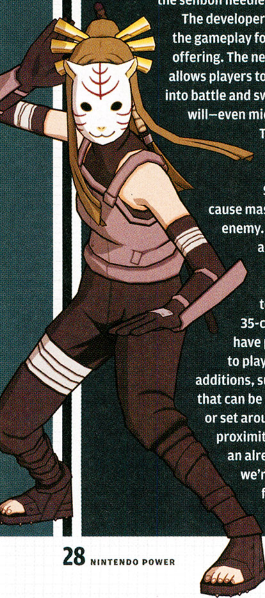
The developers have also updated the gameplay for the series' second Wii offering. The new Two Man Team mode allows players to take two characters into battle and swap between them at will—even midcombo. When in the Two Man Team mode, your characters can unleash a dual Secret Technique to cause massive damage to your enemy. Some teams (such as Anbu squadmates or student-teacher pairs) have unique dual techniques, and with a 35-character roster you'll have plenty of combinations to play around with. Other additions, such as Paper Bombs that can be thrown at your enemy or set around the stage as proximity mines, add depth to an already deep system, and we're excited to see the final product. **—TOM H.**



Towa and his Anbu comrades are capable of unleashing devastating special attacks.

Yugao
Level 06
0041 Opponents





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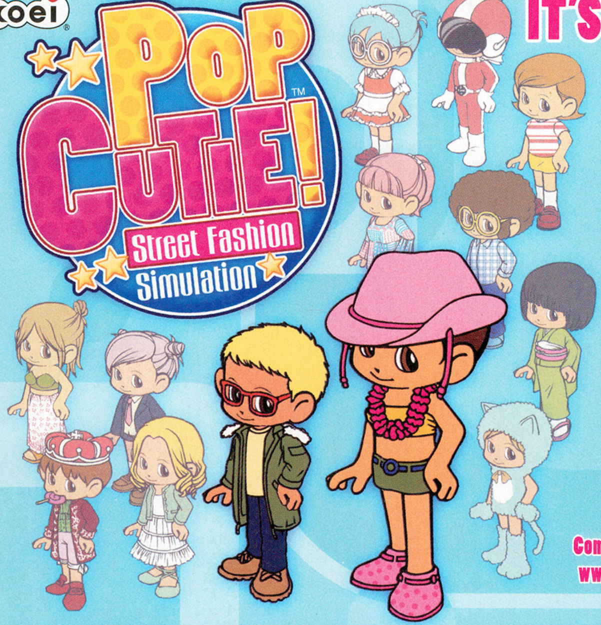

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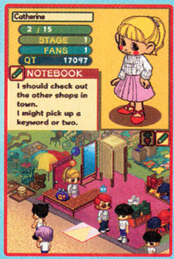
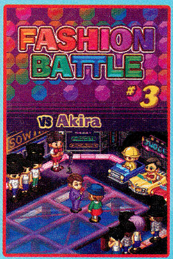

Catherine
2 / 15
STAGE 1
FANS 1
QT 17097
NOTEBOOK

I should check out the other shops in town. I might pick up a keyword or two.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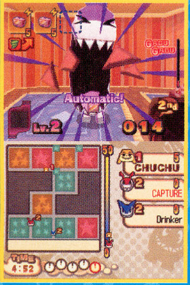
GABU GABU
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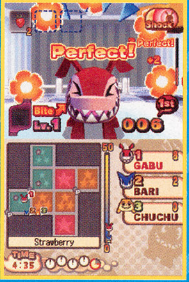
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GABU
BARI
CHUCHU
Strawberry
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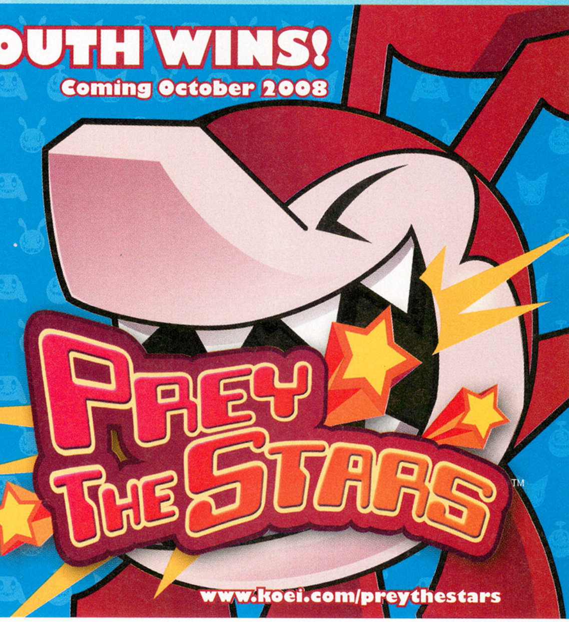
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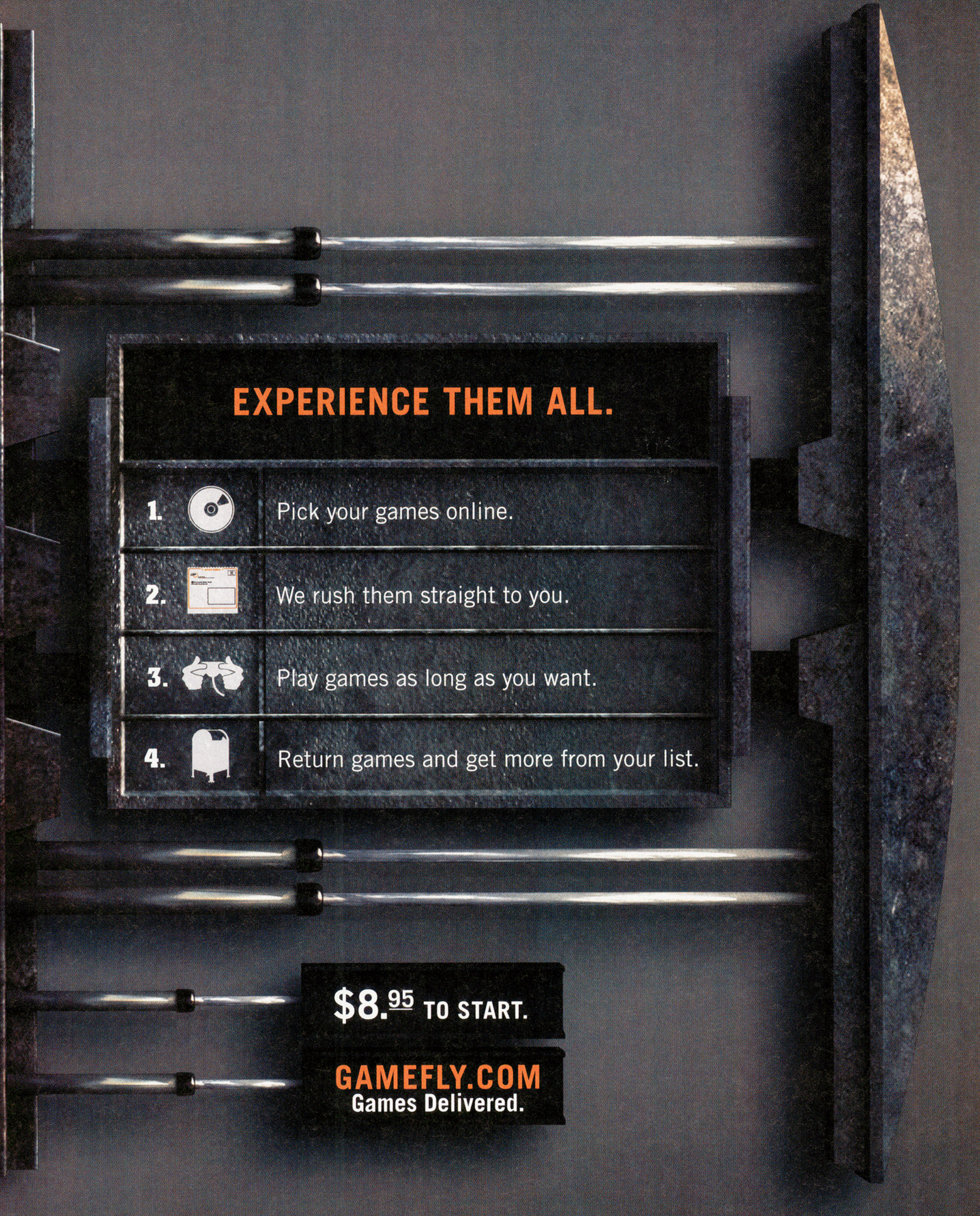

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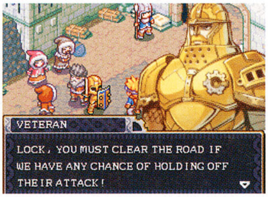
# Locked and Loaded

## >LOCK'S QUEST

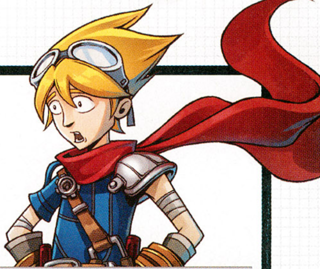
PLATFORM: **DS** • PUBLISHER: **THQ**
DEVELOPER: **5TH CELL** • RELEASE: **SEPTEMBER 2008**

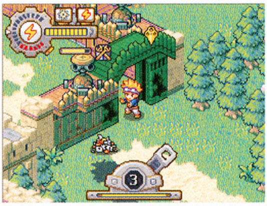
**Part character-centered** adventure, part real-time strategy game, Lock's Quest puts you in the shoes of an Archineer in training and a member of Kingdom Force; you're tasked with fighting off an army of Clockwork soldiers over the course of more than 100 battles. Young Lock splits his time between building walls and weapons and battling enemies. During the building phase, you learn to make nearly 20 new types of turrets, traps, and robotic helpers by completing parts-matching minigames, then spend "source" (the game's monetary unit) on creating airtight defenses. Once you've got the best support that your money can buy, the battle phase begins. Lock engages with enemies that you point to and performs eight types of special attacks if you're able to tap out combinations quick enough. If the hero is injured, he'll recover after some time away from battle. Developer 5th Cell has created a long story that reveals the history of Lock's world, along with one-on-one scenarios for wireless play. **—GEORGE S.**

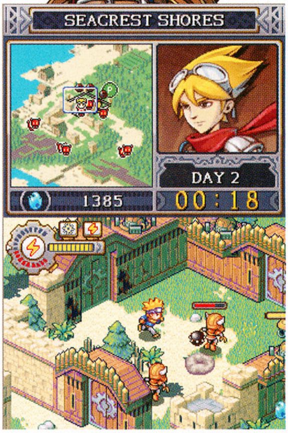


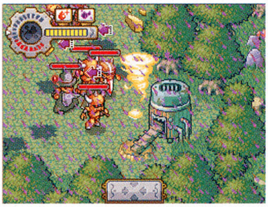
VETERAN

LOCK, YOU MUST CLEAR THE ROAD IF WE HAVE ANY CHANCE OF HOLDING OFF THEIR ATTACK!







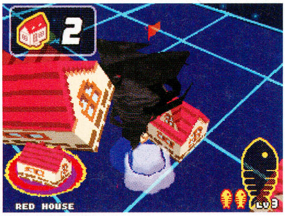


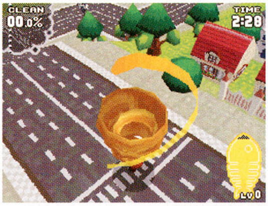
# Spin City

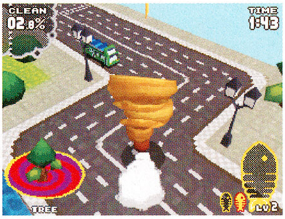
## >TORNADO

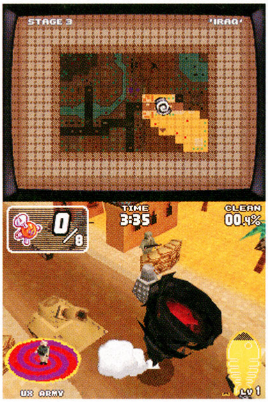
PLATFORM: **DS** • PUBLISHER: **IGNITION**
DEVELOPER: **SUCCESS** • RELEASE: **SEPTEMBER 2008**

**In whirlwind adventure** Tornado you create a twister by drawing circles with your stylus on the touch screen, then pick up trees, people, cars, and buildings by making it skitter across an alien landscape. The more you make your tornado spin, the more damage it will do. A little puff from your lips into the DS mic will give your creation the gusto to dash across the screen with gale force and really eat up the scenery. Nine of the game's 10 locations are Earth cities transported onto another world by an alien monarch. The last is the heart of the planet itself. By ripping through the cities, you return them, piece-by-piece, to their rightful place. The gameplay is a fun as the story is silly. And it's made even more absurd by nonsensical dialogue delivered by catlike creatures. In addition to mission-based Story mode, the game offers Arcade mode, in which you return to completed stages for open-ended destruction, and Battle mode for multiple-player blow-hard competitions via a local wireless connection. **—GEORGE S.**



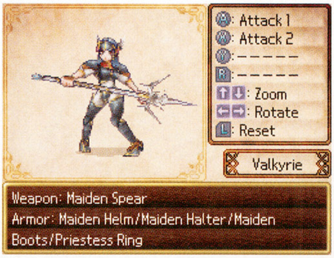


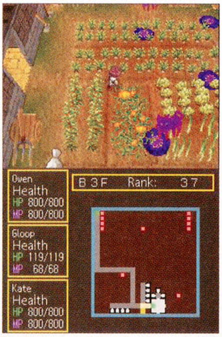


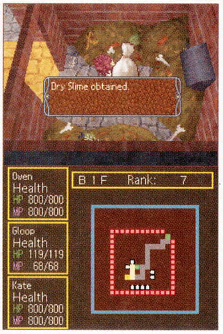


Toki
What's that?
Gina!

Cats and tornados don't usually mix well, but in this game, anything goes.


Ⓐ: Attack 1
Ⓧ: Attack 2
Ⓨ: -----
R: -----
↑↓: Zoom
←→: Rotate
L: Reset
Valkyrie
Weapon: Maiden Spear
Armor: Maiden Helm/Maiden Halter/Maiden Boots/Priestess Ring


Owen Health HP 800/800 MP 800/800
Gloop Health HP 119/119 MP 68/68
Kate Health HP 800/800 MP 800/800
B 3 F Rank: 37

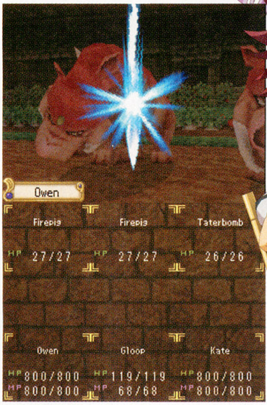

Dry Slime obtained.
Owen Health HP 800/800 MP 800/800
Gloop Health HP 119/119 MP 68/68
Kate Health HP 800/800 MP 800/800
B 1 F Rank: 7

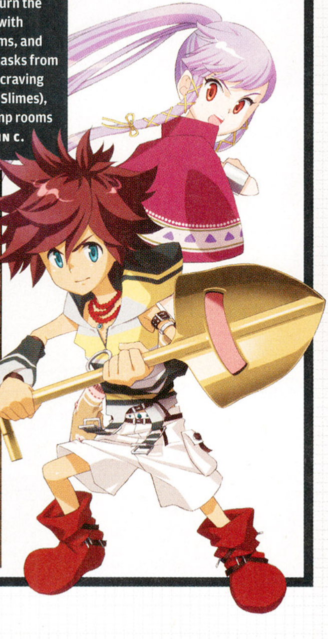
# Can You Dig It?

## > MASTER OF THE MONSTER LAIR

PLATFORM: **DS** • PUBLISHER: **ATLUS**
DEVELOPER: **GLOBAL A ENT.** • RELEASE: **OCTOBER 2008**

**Dungeon-crawlers are** a dime a dozen these days, but Master of the Monster Lair puts a twist on the genre: you build the dungeons. The town of South Arc is overrun by monsters, so the higher-ups' plan is to build dungeons for them so they stop running wild. (And the mayor claims having a dungeon nearby will boost the town's economy—which proves true when you visit the weapons shop and find that it's sold out of almost everything.) With a magical talking shovel in hand, you're tasked with digging tunnels that can be filled with rooms—purchased from your town's furniture store—to make your dungeons as monster-friendly as possible. When you return the next day, your dungeon should be bustling with beasties that you can defeat for money, items, and food ingredients. Along the way, you'll get tasks from the townsfolk: the magic-shop owner has a craving for Dry Slime (which you get from defeated Slimes), for example, so you have to build Trash Dump rooms to attract the blobby green baddies. **—JUSTIN C.**


Owen
Firepig HP 27/27
Firepig HP 27/27
Taterbomb HP 26/26
Owen HP 800/800 MP 800/800
Gloop HP 119/119 MP 68/68
Kate HP 800/800 MP 800/800



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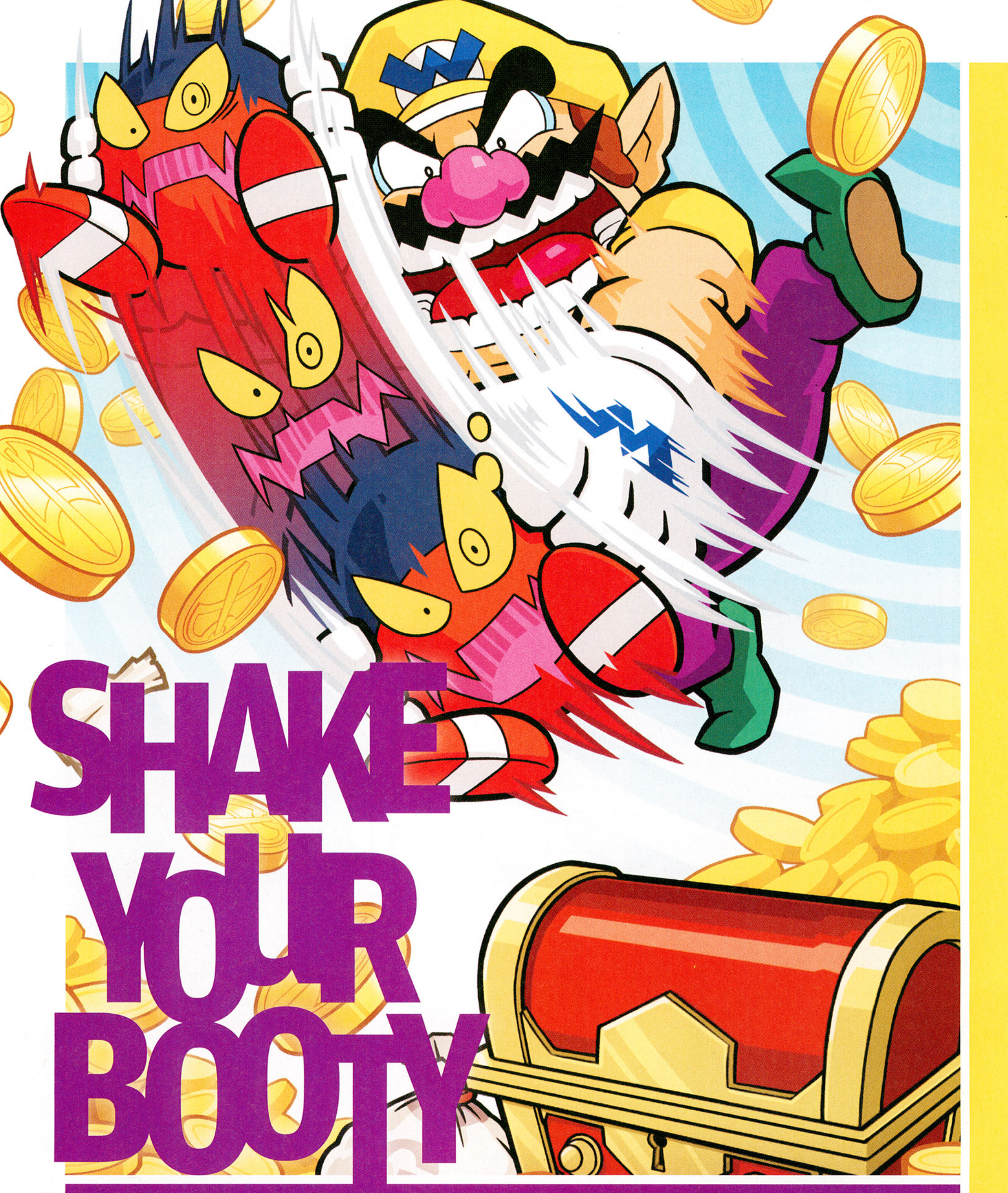
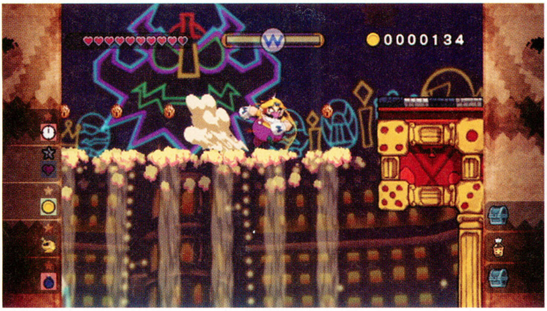
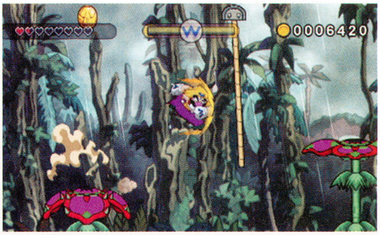


# SHAKE YOUR BOOTY

**2-D console gaming is back in a big way with Nintendo's *Wario Land: Shake It!*, fall's premier Wii platformer**

BY CHRIS SLATE





[Left] While the action can't be displayed in full 16x9, widescreen TV owners will still get the benefit of seeing the stage's bonus challenges and treasure chests listed on the sides.

Attendees of the recent E3 games expo found out what we reported last month: that Wario's new Wii treasure hunt is worth its weight in gold. On websites, message boards, and blogs across the Web, showgoers raved about the game's fresh mix of old-school 2-D platforming and impressive Wii-powered graphics and motion controls. While E3 left little doubt that Animal Crossing: City Folk and Wii Music will attract the biggest and broadest Wii audiences this fall, Wario Land: Shake It! emerged from the show as Nintendo's top gamers' game. In a year when franchises like Mario and Zelda are recharging, Shake It! is your only shot at the publisher's traditional mix of head-hopping action and head-scratching puzzles. And now that we've waddled Wario from the opening tutorial through to the credits, we're happy to confirm that this game is as fun as its star is ugly.

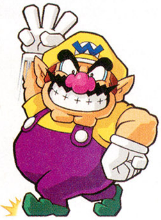
## IN WITH THE OLD

As in the classic handheld Wario Land adventures, the primary goal in Shake It! is to jump and smash through Mario-ish stages filled with floating platforms and collectible loot. When Wario reaches the end of a stage (and in Shake It!, frees an imprisoned critter known as a Merfle), our rotund antihero must pull his best Samus Aran impression and run back to the start of the level before time runs out. Going straight through a stage is pretty easy—even late levels won't pose much of a threat to pro players who simply want to get in and out as quickly as possible. Most enemies can't hurt you, and if a giant metal crate falls on Wario's head, he's comically squished but loses no health.

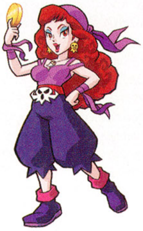
Still, this game is no pushover. The challenge comes from solving the many side puzzles, which test both your mastery of the game's controls and the gray matter between your ears. Tantalizing moneybags, diamonds, and treasure chests tease you from seemingly unreachable locations, and players must work out how to use surrounding platforms, vines, cannons, pipes, and more to reach the forbidden booty. And while it isn't necessary to grab every last coin, after you clear an area you'll need increasing amounts of cash to purchase the maps that reveal the next set of stages. Inferior treasure hunters will have to replay previously beaten levels to amass the money needed to move forward. Additionally, clever explorers can reveal hidden maps to secret side stages by pounding the ground in the right spots.

## THE CAST

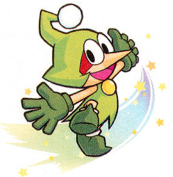
The story doesn't have a big impact on the gameplay, but the fun characters definitely make an impression. Here's a brief introduction.



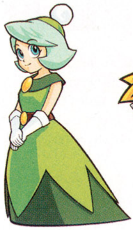
**Wario**
Old lightning 'stache springs into action to fight on the side of right once again, and as always, he's in it only for the money.



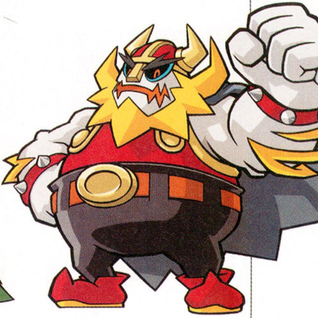
**Captain Syrup**
This provocative pirate tempts Wario into saving the Shake Dimension with irresistible booty—that is, the Bottomless Coin Sack. She also runs the shop.



**Merfle**
The Merfles, Queen Merelda's loyal friends, have also been captured. One waits for Wario to free it at the end of each stage, and will helpfully show him the way out of the level once rescued.



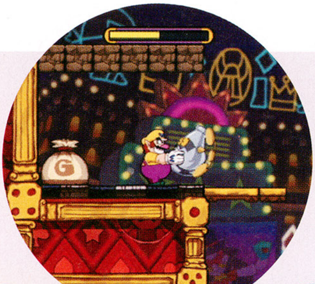
**Queen Merelda**
Wario doesn't know much about this damsel in distress, and he doesn't much care. When Wario finally does free her, the scene that plays out is priceless.

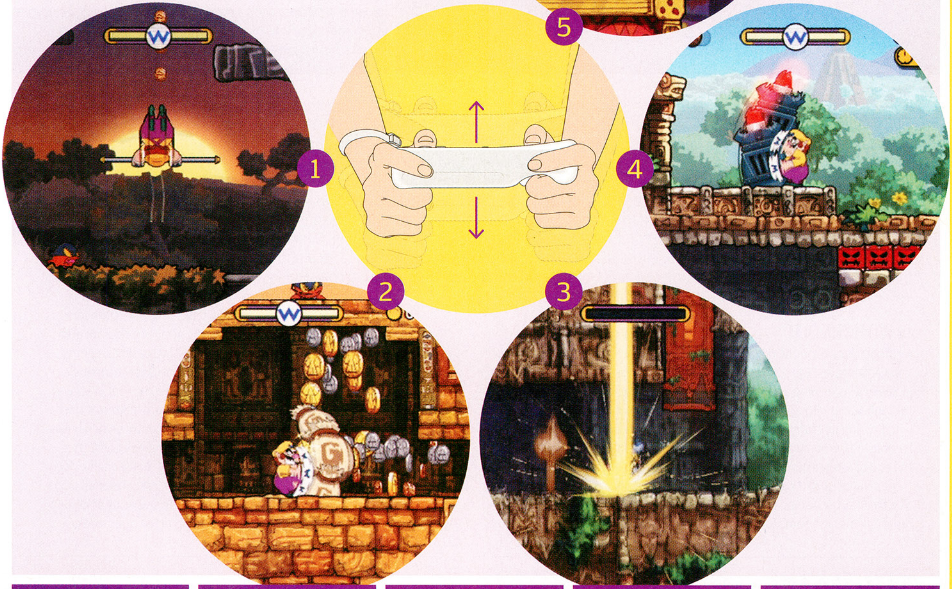


**The Shake King**
The Shake King is the tyrant of the Shake Dimension, kidnapper of the good Queen Merelda, imprisoner of the cute Merfles, and owner of the Bottomless Coin Sack. He also has a beard, but we're not saying that's evil.

# SHAKE IT!

Many of the game's motion-controlled actions are performed by simply shaking the Wii remote. Shaking lets you rough up a grabbed foe, free a Merfle, pound the ground, swing on a bar, and open coin sacks.





**1** Shaking while hanging on a bar will power up a spin jump that will allow Wario to reach higher areas.

**2** Most of Wario's cash is collected by picking up and shaking moneybags of various sizes.

**3** A quick shake while Wario's hands are free triggers an enemy-flipping ground pound.

**4** Once Wario has delved into the very deepest part of a level, he shakes a Merfle free of his prison.

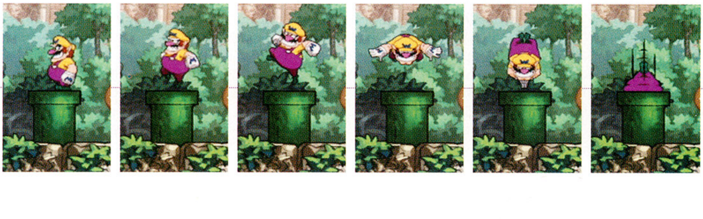
**5** Enemies can be grabbed and shaken down for health-restoring garlic, or in this case, rid them of armor.

And for expert players who want an even tougher test of their skills, each stage offers a handful of bonus challenges that can be downright nasty. Common themes include clearing a level within a tough time limit, not taking any damage, dispatching certain enemies, finding a certain amount of money, and more. Thankfully, you don't have to complete a level's set of challenges in one run, and you can replay stages endlessly in pursuit of 100% completion.

The boss fights deserve special mention—they are truly spectacular and offer some of the game's toughest trials. The first few aren't particularly tricky (until you take on the game's challenge to redefeat them under special restrictions), but later bosses will likely cost you many lives as you work to learn patterns and discover appropriate counterattacks. Taking down each boss requires mastery of different skills, and all the bosses make a great first impression with massive, superbly animated sprites and a rich arsenal of attacks. This roster of stage-ending baddies is among

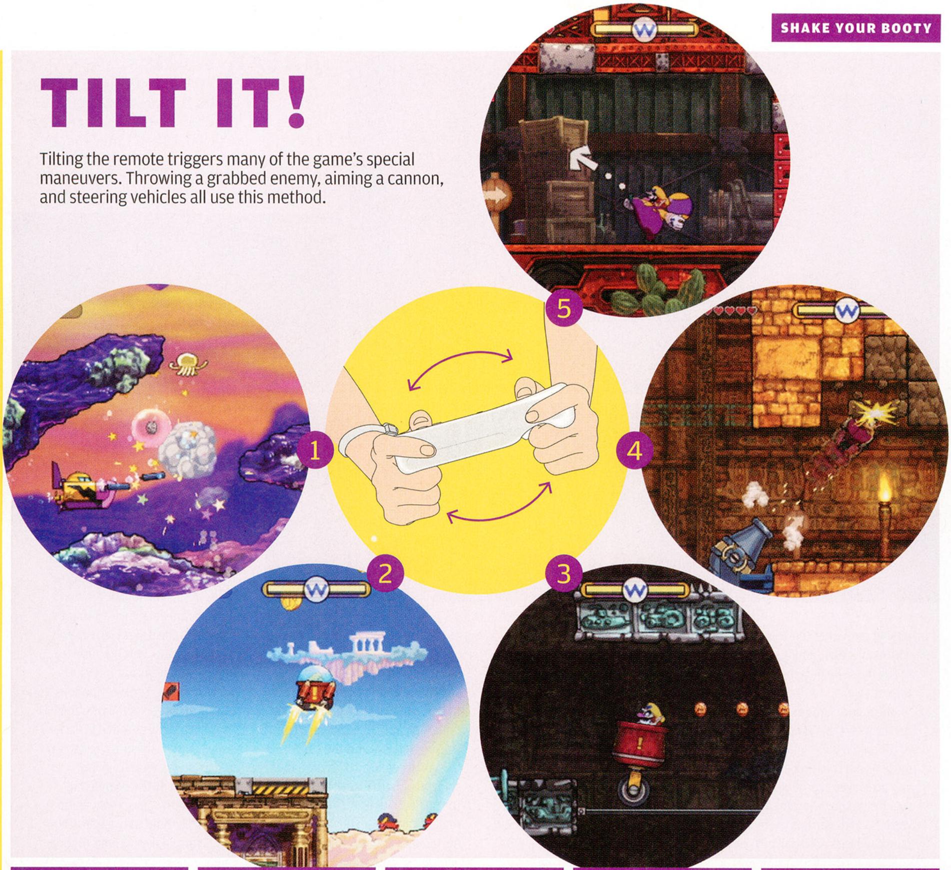
## Smooth Moves

The ultrasmooth cartoon-like animation in Wario Land: Shake It! is second to none. Here's just one example, shown frame-by-frame, of just how detailed character movements are.



# TILT IT!

Tilting the remote triggers many of the game's special maneuvers. Throwing a grabbed enemy, aiming a cannon, and steering vehicles all use this method.



**1** Some levels require Wario to captain a submarine underwater, which is steered by tilting the remote.

**2** Tilting the remote while in this jet pod aims the boosters to propel you in the desired direction.

**3** A light touch is needed to tilt this cable-riding cart in the right direction without going too far, too fast.

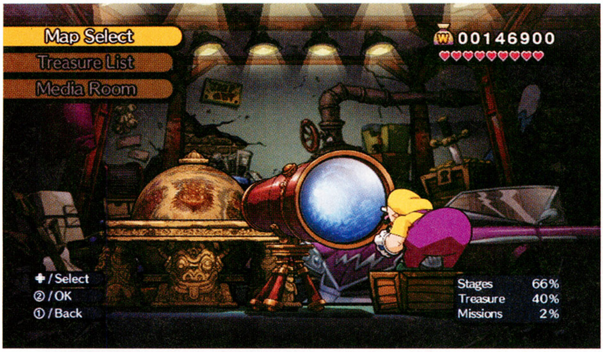
**4** Once Wario is tucked inside of a cannon, you can aim it by tilting the remote left or right.

**5** Once enemies or other objects have been picked up, they can be thrown after tilting the controller to aim.

Nintendo's best, thanks to much longer and more engaging battles than the typical three-hops-and-you're-dead wimps found in many of the publisher's other titles.

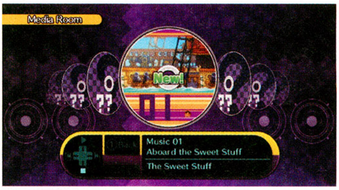
## IN WITH THE NEW

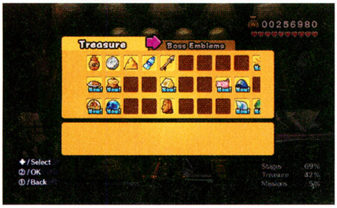
Shake It! plays like the Wario Land games of old, but it simultaneously feels brand-new thanks to its excellent use of motion controls and jaw-dropping graphics. We've rarely seen a 2-D game look anywhere near this good. After years of 2-D games being shunned by home consoles in favor of polygonal 3-D worlds, it's startling to see how much the extra muscle of a modern-day system can enhance a 2-D title. Most notably, the movements of Wario and every other character are enhanced with so many frames of animation that the game feels like an interactive cartoon. The environments look like they are composed of paintings instead of the repeated block textures used in 2-D handheld games, and a TV screen allows for much bigger worlds to play around in than the portable systems that so often provide our 2-D fix.

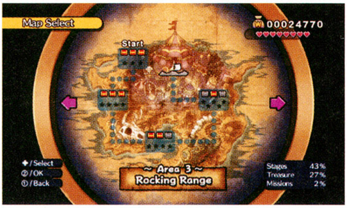


## BREAK TIME

Between stages Wario can visit his garage, where he can take a break from the gold-grabbing action to enjoy his treasure collection and listen to any tunes that he's unlocked. And when he's ready to jump back into the fray, he can choose his next level.







Having seen what the Wii can do with classic 2-D gaming, we'd love to see the style become a trend for the console.

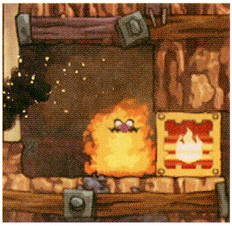
The game requires you to perform certain tasks by shaking or tilting the Wii remote, but the motions are the icing on the cake and are never overdone. Most regularly, a quick shake triggers Wario's earth-rattling ground punch (which dazes bad guys and jars objects in the environment) and shakes dazed enemies or moneybags that you've picked up. Holding the 1 Button while tilting the remote lines up a throw of a held enemy. The gameplay's meat and potatoes—running, jumping, stomping, charging, etc.—is handled via traditional button and Control Pad presses with the remote held horizontally like a traditional controller. In special situations, shaking or tilting come into play to steer a one-wheeled cart, swing on a bar like a gymnast, pilot a submarine, fly a jet pod, and more. In every instance the special controls work perfectly, are fun to use, and provide a nice break from the usual action.

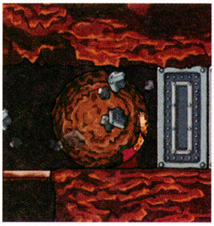
For even more variety, Wario sometimes takes on different forms to get ahead. Catching on fire, rolling inside a snowball, and being flattened by a boulder probably aren't a lot of fun for the grubby garlic-gobbler, but will get him into areas that his usual pudgy self can't penetrate. Luckily, though these forms may hurt his pride, they don't impact his life bar.

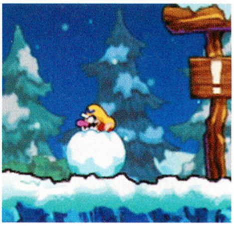
## SETTING THE STAGE

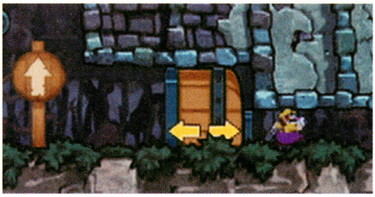
The action in Wario Land: Shake It! isn't especially story-driven, but the game's wacky premise at least makes for fun intro and ending movies. Produced by famed anime studio Production I.G (*Blood: The Last Vampire, Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex*), these scenes show the rise of the Shake King, a dastardly, bearded villain who has overthrown the good Queen Merelda and her cute-and-colorful pals, the Merfles, to rule the Shake Dimension. All Wario really cares about, however, is the Bottomless Coin Sack, which the evil king has also taken. Greedy as ever, old Purple Pants uses a magic telescope (which was given to him by a sexy pirate lady) to visit the Shake Dimension via a magic globe, and.... You know, it really makes sense only if you watch the intro movie. Let's just say that Wario sets off on a journey to topple the Shake King and get rich.

Between stages Wario returns to his map room to plot his next move. From here you can choose to jump to the next level, replay a previous one, visit the shop to unlock new areas or buy heart containers and recovery potions, view a collection of unique (albeit useless) treasures found in each stage's three treasure chests, and listen to music from any stage that is 100% completed. On the map-room screen, Wario shakes his rump back and forth in a disturbingly rhythmic motion that's impossible to tear your eyes away from—like a lava lamp filled









## TAKING A BEATING

As in past Wario Land titles, occasionally Wario has to take some punishment to make progress. While the pudgy protagonist surely takes no pleasure in being set on fire, crushed by a boulder, rolled into a snowball, or shrunken down, you're sure to get a chuckle or two.

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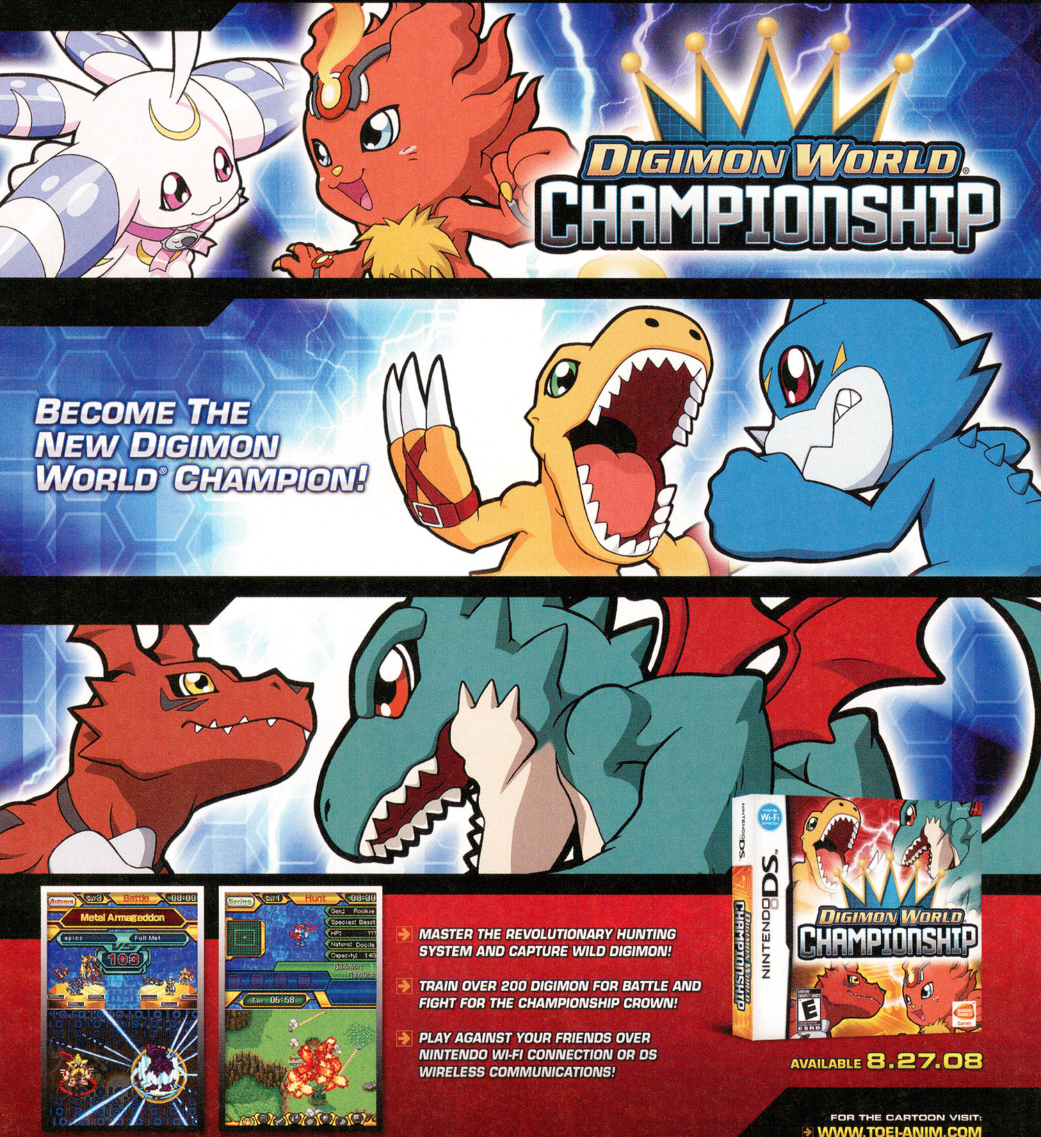
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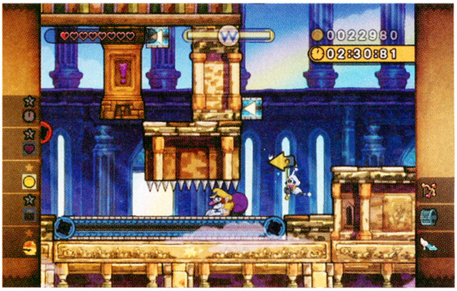
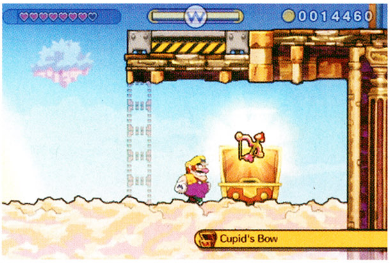
with something horrible.

As you progress, you'll appreciate the tremendous amount of variety between the game's five areas (each split into four standard levels plus some hidden ones), which keeps the action fresh and exciting. Even within stages that share similar themes, different gameplay elements keep you guessing as to what's coming next. A set of stages might have you running across a series of timed water-jet streams, hopping between vanishing platforms that are visible only when lit by roving searchlights, raising sunken pyramids from beneath the sand, working a giant slot machine, and much more.

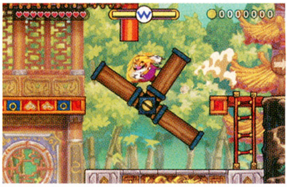
## IT'S WARIO TIME!

The jury isn't in quite yet, but Shake It! might be the tubby tightwad's best non-WarioWare title yet. It's got plenty of challenge for die-hard Nintendo gamers, yet amateur action-game fans can enjoy it on a more basic level. This action-platformer won't turn the world upside down like Super Mario Galaxy, but its rock-solid gameplay, fun controls, and good looks should be plenty to satisfy players looking for a classic Nintendo experience to complement the publisher's more-novel titles this fall. The game's late-September launch isn't far off, so practice your "heh-he-hehhh!" and look for a full review next issue.



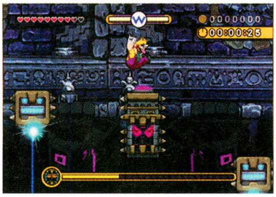


The game's stages showcase an impressive amount of diversity, with varying elements such as conveyor belts and tilting platforms.

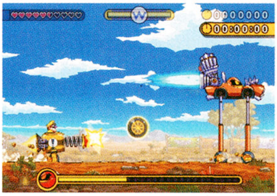


## WARIO HATERS

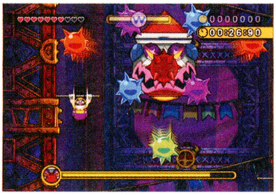
The boss battles offer classic throwdowns, each fight testing players' wits as well as their reflexes. The first couple aren't extraordinarily tough, but the difficulty ramps up fast once you reach the middle of the pack. Here's a quick peek at some of Wario's biggest roadblocks to fortune and glory—don't worry; we won't spoil what it takes to beat them.



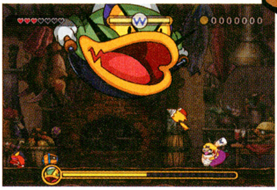
**ROLLANRATL** This giant stone warrior uses the environment against you, but has a very obvious weakness.



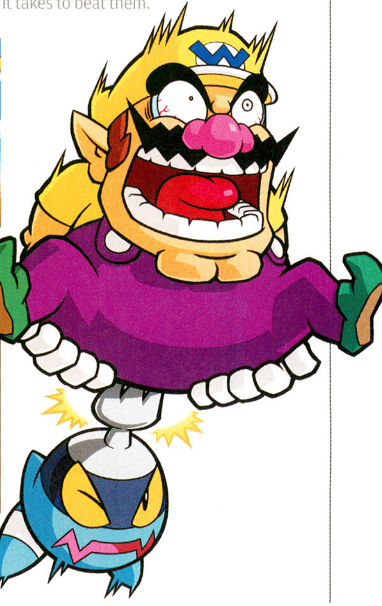
**HOT RODERICK** Easily Wario's most unique fight, this high-speed chase requires you to tilt the Wii remote to move forward and backward.



**CHORTLEBOT** Things get quite a bit tougher against this demonic clown head, which changes up tactics as the fight progresses.



**LARGE FRY** The growing throngs of enemies become a bigger threat as the fight goes on, but could be the key to victory.



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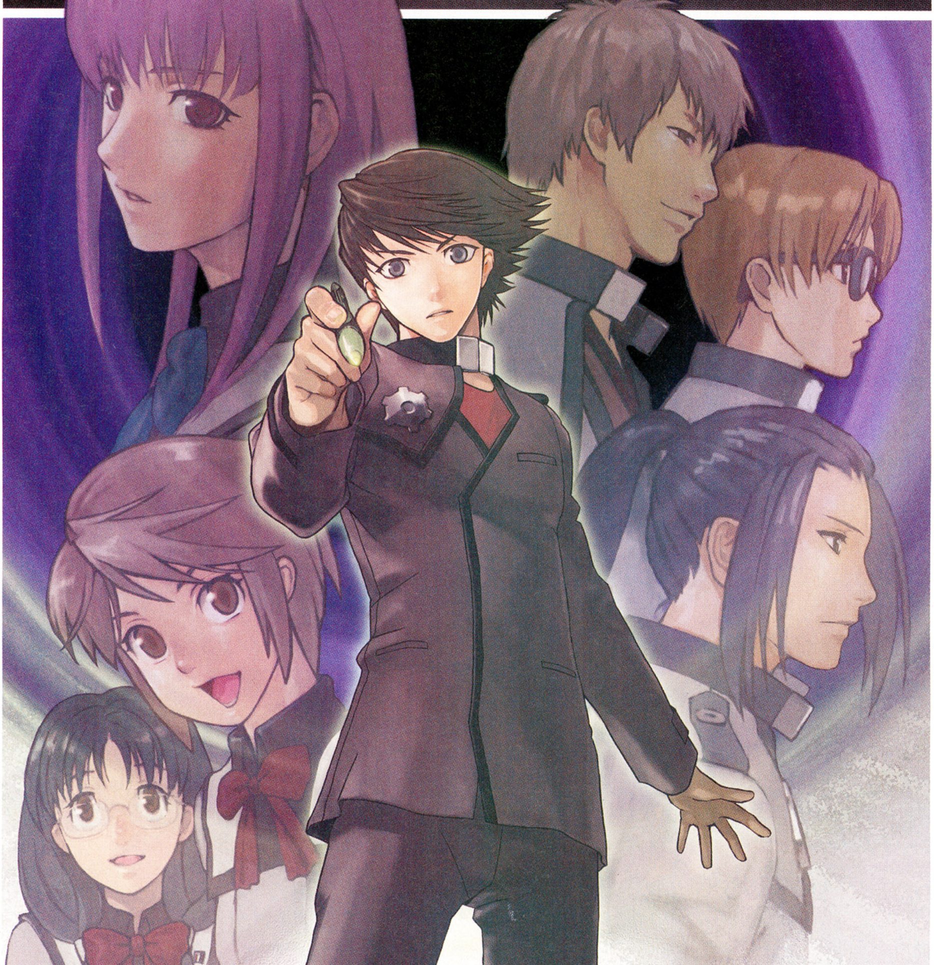
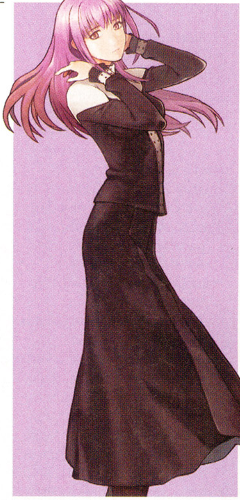
# DATE *with* DESTINY

Get behind-the-scenes insight on **Time Hollow**, a unique point-and-click DS adventure that lets you alter the past to change the present.



BY CHRIS HOFFMAN

The point-and-click graphic-adventure genre seems to be enjoying a resurgence thanks to the popularity of the DS, but Konami's Time Hollow is unlike any other game of this type that we've seen. In addition to talking to people, exploring areas, and using items, you wield the power of the Hollow Pen—a stylus-shaped device that lets you carve a hole into the past, thereby allowing you to manipulate events that shape the present.



Kori has a lot of secrets—like whether or not that's her natural hair color.

You play the role of Ethan Kairos, a seemingly normal high schooler whose last name just so happens to mean "right or opportune moment" in Greek. Except for his fascination with watches, he's a pretty typical kid—he lives with his mother, father, and pet cat Sox, has a solid circle of friends at school, and is the object of some of the younger female students' affections. He's also got an uncle, Derek, who's kind of a deadbeat. Before Ethan goes to sleep on the eve of his 17th birthday, his father promises to tell him a secret the following day, but he doesn't get a chance—when Ethan wakes up, his reality has been altered; his parents have evidently been missing for 12 years and he lives under the supervision of his uncle. However, he also finds himself in possession of the time-altering Hollow Pen.

At first, nothing makes sense—not only has Ethan's reality changed, but his head is filled with memories he never previously had. However, by visiting the places in his flashbacks and talking with people to flesh out the details, he learns to use the Hollow Pen in specific locations to change the past and put things back the way they should be. Using the pen is as simple as drawing a circle on the touch screen, but there are limitations on how big the hole can be; opening the hole at just the right spot is essential. Using the pen also consumes Ethan's life force (there's a cost for meddling with time, after all), so you have to make the most of every opportunity.

Although figuring out what happened to Ethan's parents is the game's primary mystery, other sinister threats will keep you occupied. In the game's first chapter (out of six), your friend's younger sister goes missing; later an acquaintance gets killed while riding her bike. It's up to you to reach into the past to prevent these events, but sometimes doing so can have unintended consequences—for example, if you save one person another might suffer, and who knows what will happen from an act as innocent as saving a dog? A fairly linear story means you can't usually avoid the unintentional side effects, but it's interesting to watch them play out—just as it's interesting trying to determine who or what is altering the past and causing Ethan so much grief.

To gain more insight into this unique graphic adventure, we spoke to the game's director, Junko Kawano of Konami.

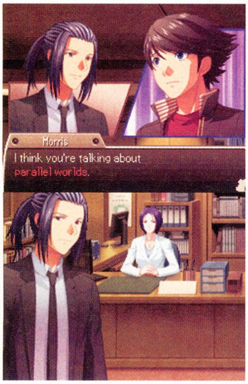
**NINTENDO POWER** **Time Hollow shares a lot of ideas with your 2001 PS2 game Shadow of Destiny (which we're also big fans of). What is it about the time-manipulation concept that appeals to you?**

**JUNKO KAWANO** I get asked this question quite often, but to be honest there is really no specific reason why I use this concept except that I like it. I guess that using this concept allows me to go beyond the norms and allows more creative freedom in the storytelling process and [gets] the players more excited.

**Why is the main implement in Time Hollow in the form of a pen? And what makes the ability to make small holes in time a more interesting mechanic than being able to simply time-travel to different periods?**

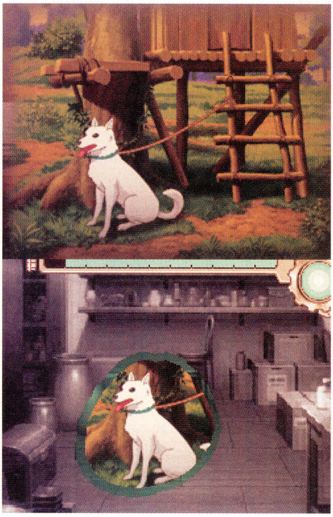
To be honest, we came up with this concept because we wanted to create a game that allows the users to have fun with the DS stylus. We wanted the users to become immersed into the game world and have an experience that is not possible in the real world. Therefore, we first came up with the idea of using the stylus to create a circle, then the idea of that circle creating a hole that would allow you to see into an alternate world that was in a different time. We limited the things the users can do on the other side of the hole. The user cannot travel through the hole; they can only see the outcome of the changes they made in the past by the changes that occur in the present, which we felt would make things more exciting.

**We like the fact that the story—a young man losing his parents and then his friends—is very personal. Why did you choose that rather than something broader (like saving the world or**

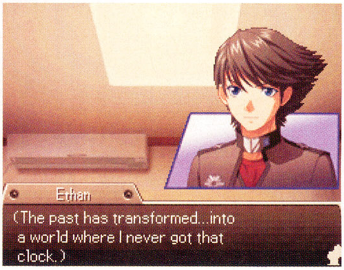


Morris

I think you're talking about parallel worlds.

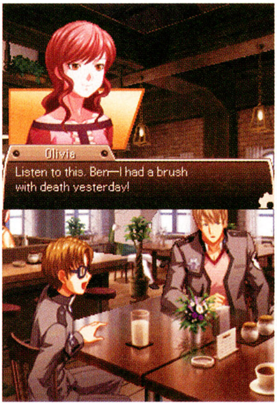


After you gather enough clues, you can carve a hole into the past and interact with whatever's on the other side.



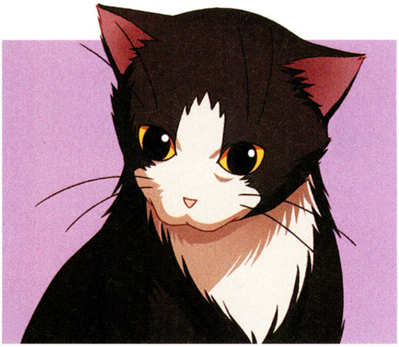
Ethan

(The past has transformed...into a world where I never got that clock.)



**Olivia**

Listen to this, Ben—I had a brush with death yesterday!



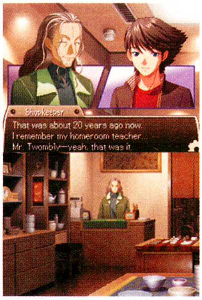
[Above] Sox the cat isn't just a cute face—he helps restore Ethan's life meter.

**something in that vein)?**
I chose a more personal story because I wanted players to feel that they are actually changing the past rather than just watching it objectively like a movie. I thought changing the world would surprise players, but if the story is not personal, it would be difficult for players to feel that what they do actually changes something. I wanted to focus more on how people's feelings and fates are changed by the actions of Ethan.

**What do you feel makes Ethan a compelling protagonist?**
Ethan is pure and straightforward. Since the user is playing as Ethan, I tried not to make his personality too strong. With that said though, he is still a very righteous person who will stay on the path of good, even when people around him have evil intentions. I also think his hairstyle is cool....

**Who do you consider your favorite character in the game? For me, it was Uncle Derek, since it was hard to tell if he was a good guy or a bad guy.**
I like everyone, of course. But my favorite is Kori because I struggled to develop her character.

**With all the time-alteration that goes on in the game, it seems like it could be very hard to write the story without causing contradictions or paradoxes. How did you keep track of the complex plot?**
I set all the game rules before I started writing the story and I repeatedly checked the plot. The most difficult part was to adjust and confirm how much and what would be undone when the past is changed. I spent a lot of time on that. But still this genre tends to have some contradictions.... (I think finding such contradictions is one of the ways to enjoy time-paradox games, though.)



**Shopkeeper**

That was about 20 years ago now. I remember my homeroom teacher... Mr. Twombly—yeah, that was it.

**What do you think are the most interesting time-altering scenarios in the game?**
I think it's interesting when you change something in the past and the changes it makes to the present were unexpected. For example, in Chapter 2, Ethan tries to prevent an accident by immobilizing a bicycle, but this in turns ends up causing another accident. This is the type of plot I enjoy writing.

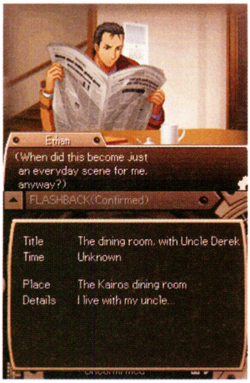
**Despite the complex plot, the gameplay seems fairly straightforward. What are your thoughts on keeping the game linear and accessible?**
I was thinking about making the overall game accessible. But the plot got pretty complicated. Maybe it is just fate for choosing this type of genre. Personally, I think the gameplay could have been a little more difficult.

**How would you compare the game to Shadow of Destiny? Do you think of this as a spiritual successor?**
I don't consider this title a successor. To put it simply, this title is a more accessible version of Shadow of Destiny.

**Is there any special significance to the cats that appear in your games? Why did you use the cat as a way to restore Ethan's life?**
People often remind me that I love cats and it makes me want to use cats somewhere in the games I work on. In regards to Sox, I thought the size of a cat would be perfect to go though the time hole. Also, I wanted Sox to be one of a few friends who understand Ethan (I think Sox does) even when most people don't even remember what he did in changing the world.

**You seem to prefer making games that focus on characters and stories rather than action. Is that something you consciously strive for, and if so, why?**
The first game I worked on after I joined Konami was Suikoden. Maybe that's why I've gotten better at making that type of game that focuses on character and story development.

**What would you say is the overarching theme of Time Hollow?**
The underlying theme is "What can you do right now?" Although the core part of the gameplay is changing the past, the present is the standard and it comes first. I think the most important thing to take out of this is that neither the past nor the future, but the present, is where you exist right now and is what people should focus on in life. And "family love," of course!

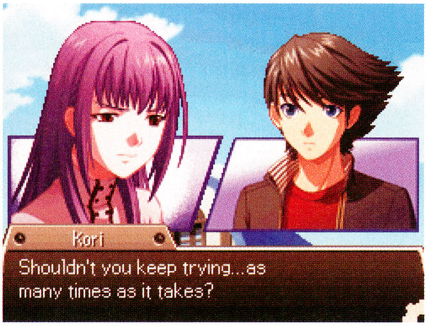


**Ethan**

(When did this become just an everyday scene for me, anyway?)

FLASHBACK(Confirmed)

Title The dining room, with Uncle Derek
Time Unknown
Place The Kairos dining room
Details I live with my uncle...



**Kori**

Shouldn't you keep trying...as many times as it takes?

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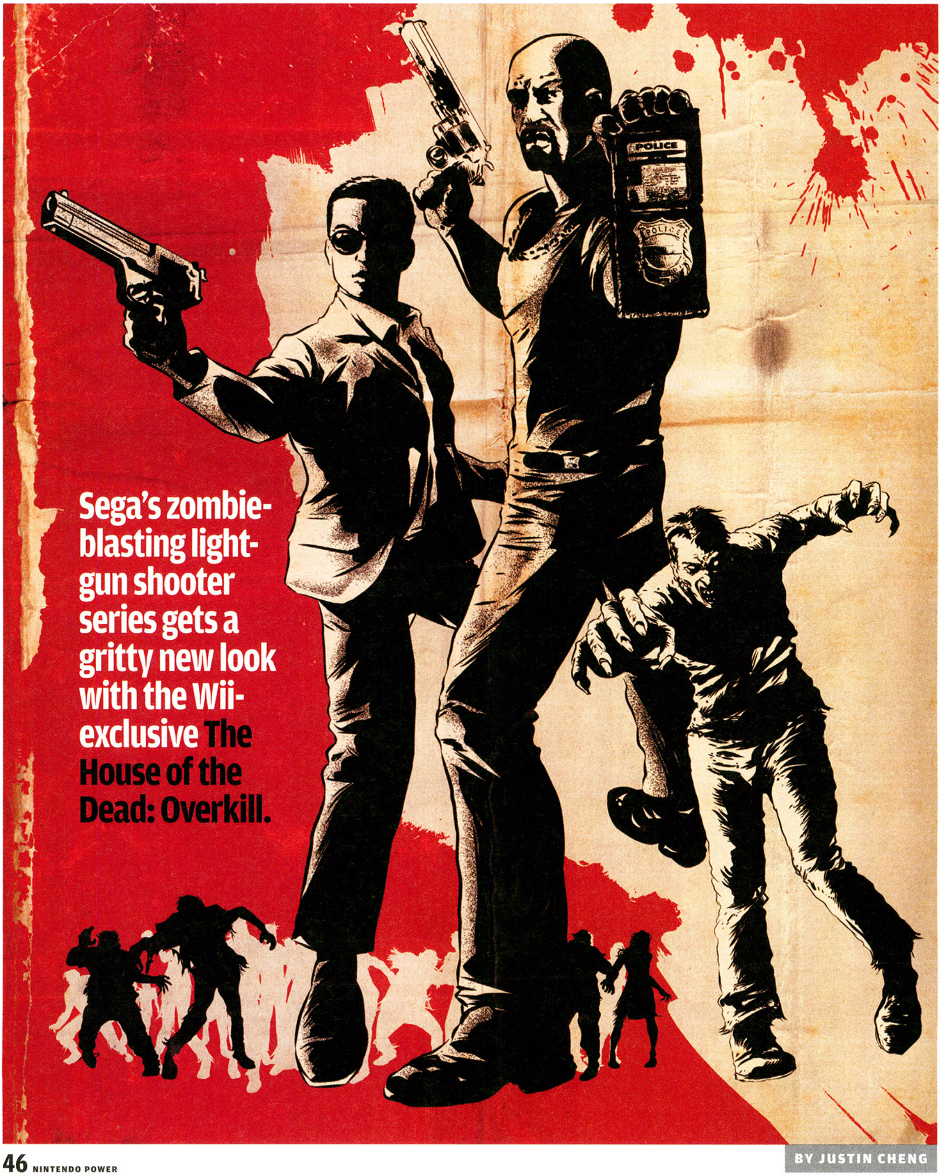
# DEAD ON TARGET



Sega's zombie-blasting light-gun shooter series gets a gritty new look with the Wii-exclusive **The House of the Dead: Overkill.**

BY JUSTIN CHENG

## "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WELCOME TO VIOLENCE."

When a game has an introduction like that, you know you're in for something intense—and The House of the Dead: Overkill, the latest entry in Sega's light-gun shooter series, is definitely that. While you may already be familiar with the franchise—whether it's from the popular arcade games, the home-console ports, or (shudder) the Uwe Boll "film"—Overkill probably isn't exactly what you were expecting.

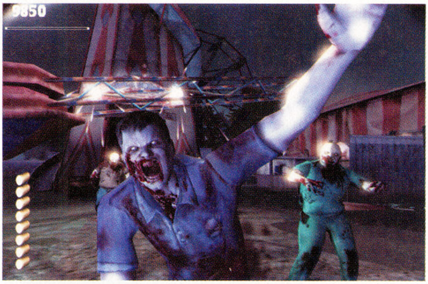
"We have really turned the franchise totally on its head," says Neil McEwan, producer at developer Headstrong Games. "The game is heavily inspired by the B movies of American cinema. This styling is conveyed in everything from our art style, presentation, gore, and violence." More specifically, McEwan explains, "the prevailing style for Overkill is based upon the 'grindhouse' movies of the '60s and '70s.... These films were made on a tight budget and so the editing and film quality was often poor, leading to dodgy splicing, film scratches, color burning, etc." As such, the onscreen action is covered with a grainy, scratched-up filter. Dick Dale-style surf music plays in the background, contrasting with the images of over-the-top bloody violence onscreen. Suffice it to say this is a decidedly different take on The House of the Dead. But that's not a bad thing in the slightest—this new yet purposely weathered style provides a refreshing and unique twist on the familiar formula, reinvigorating our enthusiasm for the 12-year-old series.

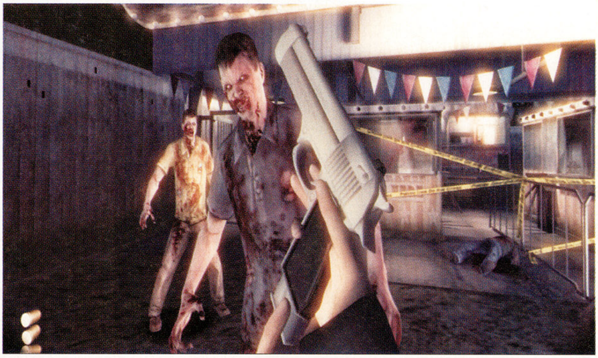
### SHOOT OR DIE

Aesthetics aside, however, the gameplay remains distinctly House of the Dead. Why mess with a good thing? Shooting zombies is always good fun, especially when playing cooperatively. Those who played The House of the Dead 2 & 3 Return on Wii earlier this year should be able to pick up and start playing; you aim at the screen with your Wii remote, press the B Button to fire, and waggle the remote to reload. This time, however, you can push the reticle to the edge of the screen and move the camera around. It's still on rails, but "time has moved on and people play a lot of first-person games and we just wanted to give some control back to the player," McEwan explains. "You hear a sound over to the left, you kind of whiz around to the left and deal with that situation then to the right, and then maybe something starts dropping down from above. It just feels more absorbing that way."

There's more to the gameplay, but it's not overly complex, nor should it be. "The core experience is focused on great shooting feedback—cool weapons, cool hit effects, tons of enemies," McEwan promises. "HotD games are positioned very differently in the market to Resident Evil, Silent Hill, and other 'survival-horror' titles. Where they are suspenseful, gloomy and unpleasant, HotD is adrenaline-fueled, fast, gory action."

This concept of an adrenaline-fueled shooter is further emphasized by the array of firearms in the game. In addition to your standard Desert Eagle-like pistol—which, like all of the weapons, is upgradable, giving you more firepower or a larger clip—you can use a compact submachine gun, a grenade launcher, and other weapons yet to be finalized. Even





[Right] Different weapons have different reload times. [Below] When rescuing survivors, don't accidentally shoot them.

### NEW BLOOD

The House of the Dead: Overkill is notable for a number of reasons—not only is it the first game in the series to be developed for a console instead of the arcade; it's also the first to be developed outside of Japan. (Headstrong Games—formerly Kuju London—is based in England.) "Initially Sega approached us and we really did bite their hands for the opportunity," explains McEwan. "All of the team are massive HotD fans and we got really excited about the possibility of being involved in a much-loved classic franchise."

better, McEwan teases, "we'll have dual-wielding as well.... If you've got two controllers you can go in with two weapons in each level. You can change up the combination of the weapons on the 1 and 2 Buttons, so you can alternate [between them]. You can go into a level with four weapons and dual-wield them."

Sometimes the living dead can get in your face, however, which is where the grapple mechanic and the pistol-whipping melee attacks come into play. When a baddie grabs you, simply shake the Wii remote to dispatch him. As McEwan tells us, "The cool thing about the Wii is the physicalness of it, so we're trying incorporate ... that into the game, and we just thought it was a really cool feature to be able to pistol-whip someone into submission when they get close to you and see their head explode."

So obviously, Overkill is a very gory game—certainly gorier than prior iterations—and it becomes even bloodier when you use the many power-ups. For example, one power-up slows everything down, bullet-time-style, making it much easier to target and blast zombies apart. And we mean that literally—you can shoot off the zombies' individual extremities, and the undead will react to the gunshots, with their blood splattering onto the environment. "We're focusing a lot on the gore and dismemberment of the zombies and what kind of weapons are cool and can rip zombies apart," shares McEwan.

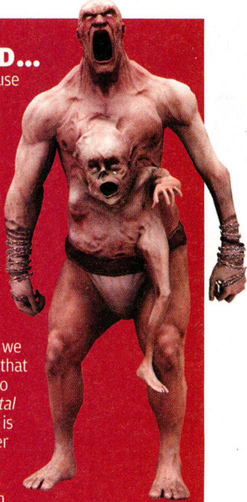
## A G THING

Besides the undead-shooting light-gun action, the other constant in House of the Dead games is an AMS agent named G. (None of the games in the series reveal what *AMS* or *G* stand for.) Little is known about G aside from his penchant for riddling zombies with bullets, but Overkill will explore more about his backstory. "Overkill is a prequel to the previous versions of HotD," McEwan reveals. "We join Agent G on his first assignment after leaving his AMS training. We've teamed him up with hard-boiled Detective Washington.... Together they take on Papa Caesar, a criminal kingpin of Bayou County. Caesar has acquired access to a mysterious chemical compound that makes individuals both significantly stronger and particularly open to suggestion. Unfortunately, beyond a certain dose irreversible mutation occurs. With the assistance of his biochemist lackey Jasper, he plans to refine the chemical and master its properties." Whether the story ties into the other games and whether it involves series villain Goldman remains to be seen.

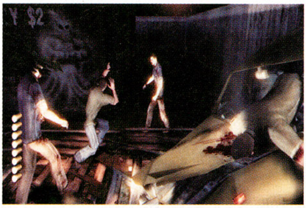
The story is secondary to the action, of course—especially in a series that's known for its convoluted stories—but McEwan and his colleagues are trying to make it as engaging and over-the-top as possible: "You won't believe the plot when you see it unravel," McEwan asserts. "It's just amazing and totally off-the-wall." And because the story has branching paths, Overkill offers a lot of replay value. (The developers are aiming to make the game last two to two-and-a-half hours in the first playthrough. While that sounds short, it's actually longer than the original arcade games.)

The Louisiana setting allows for

## OPEN YOUR MIND...



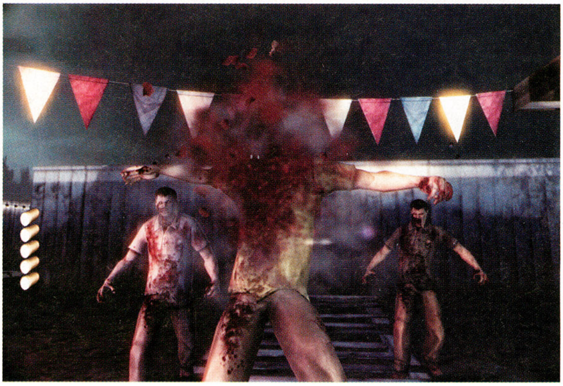
It's not all just zombies in The House of the Dead: Overkill, of course—there are the usual rats and crows ("But they're a lot bigger and nastier than [in] the original games," says McEwan), as well as massive bosses to defeat. "[The bosses] are grotesque," McEwan proclaims. "When we do our weekly demos as a team and a couple of the people go 'Oh, that's disgusting—we can't do that!' then that's a winner for me." We haven't seen any of the boss battles in action yet, but we were teased with this deadly duo that immediately reminded us of Kuato from Ah-nuld's 1990 sci-fi flick *Total Recall*. We're told that the big guy is blind and has to rely on his smaller brother's directions, which will undoubtedly be handy to know when we actually get to face them.



For the first time in series history, you can turn to look and fire in any direction.

## SUPER COP

The latest addition to The House of the Dead series' protagonist roster is Detective Washington. "Washington has worked homicide most of his life," McEwan tells us. "He's a maverick cop, whose ability and competence are offset by his refusal to play by the rules. He also has quite a reputation as a ladies' man."



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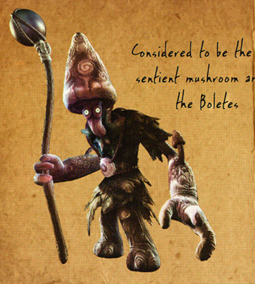
# MUSHROOM CLASSIFICATION CHART

## A VISUAL EXPLORATION OF THE COMET'S EFFECTS ON EARTH'S NATIVE MUSHROOM FAMILIES

GOOD GUYS


Considered to be the first sentient mushroom among the Boletes

**BOLETE SAGE**

Slow and lumbering

Melee expert

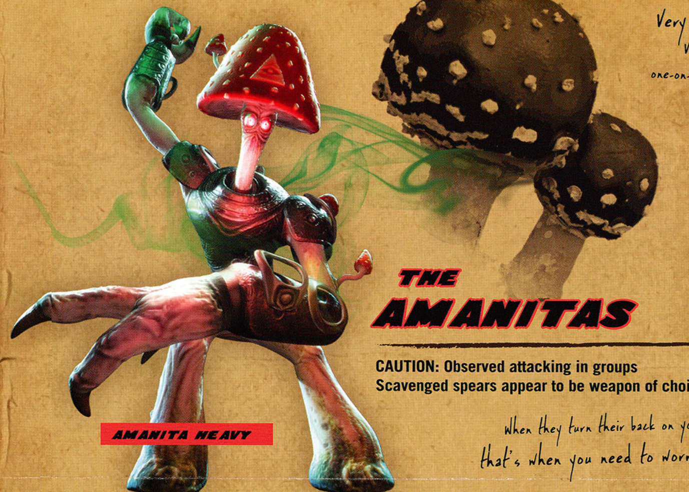
**BOLETE HEAVY**

Ranged weapon tactician

### THE BOLETES

**BOLETE SCOUT**

Camouflage and agility make them perfect for surprise attacks.

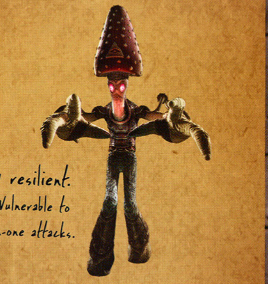


### THE AMANITAS

CAUTION: Observed attacking in groups
Scavenged spears appear to be weapon of choice.

**AMANITA HEAVY**

When they turn their back on you, that's when you need to worry.


Very resilient. Vulnerable to one-on-one attacks.

**AMANITA SCOUT**

**AMANITA SAGE**

EVIL SHROOMS

MUSHROOM MEN™ IN THE SPORE WARS AND RISE OF THE FUNGI

They will help you on your way.

The Scouts know things.

**MOREL SCOUT**

The Morel defense. Unfortunately, they are much weaker than their Amanita counterparts.

**MOREL HEAVY**

**MOREL SAGE**

### THE MORELS

Very intelligent. Years of technological tinkering have led the Morels to master mechanical defense systems. Their engineering prowess could become quite useul.

These guys are willing even to sacrifice themselves at the behest of the tribe. This makes them highly dangerous. PROCEED WITH CAUTION!

**LEPIOTA HEAVY**

"The Enforcer"

### THE LEPIOTAS

Tough and resourceful, the Lepiotas can be counted on to dole out punishment. And it can be painful. They will secure human artifacts and even insects, using them in slashing attacks.

**LEPIOTA SCOUT**

Mostly use limbs for balance so attack power is limited. Be advised, they are known to use mind control.

**LEPIOTA SAGE**

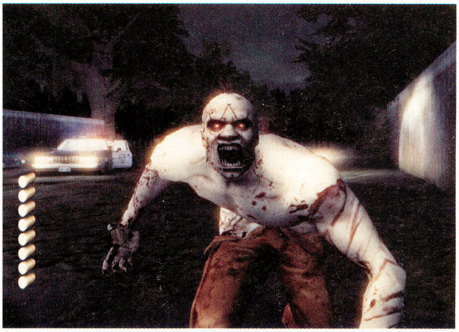
PRODUCT RANGE FROM RATING PENDING TO EVERYONE
RP-E
Mild Fantasy Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org
Visit www.esrb.org for rating information.

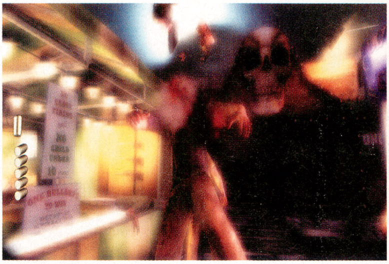
CAUTION: COMET EFFECTS NOT LIMITED TO MUSHROOM SENTIENCE. OTHER PLANT AND ANIMAL WILDLIFE AFFECTED.

There is more to learn
MUSHROOMMEN.COM

a good amount of level variety, from a swamp to a prison to a plantation house. The area we experienced was a carnival where booths are burning, rides are exploding (in one of the game's many scripted cinematic sequences), and the living dead are running amok. You really get a sense of the chaos of a zombie apocalypse as you trek through the fairgrounds, dispatch zombies, and attempt to rescue *F*-bomb-dropping human survivors. (Hey, if zombies were about to munch on you, you probably wouldn't be able to keep your language clean. Besides, Sega has its sights set on a Mature rating.) Thankfully, even at this early stage, the voice acting is a noticeable step up from the infamously bad performances in the previous games.

The developers are clearly taking everything that worked about the original House of the Dead games and putting their own spin on it. More importantly, they're devoting a lot of time and effort to making The House of the Dead: Overkill a top-notch game worthy of the franchise's moniker. Sega of Japan and original HotD developer AM1 certainly sound impressed, giving the Overkill team at Headstrong their blessing: "We've run all of our concepts and ideas past Sega of Japan. They have been very supportive and are really excited about where we are taking the game." Based on what we've seen so far, so are we, which makes the wait until the game's spring 2009 release all the more unbearable.





[Left] Shooting zombies in the face is a lot easier when you've got power-ups.

**INTERVIEW** **TAKASHI ODA**

## DIRECTING THE DEAD

**All previous installments of The House of the Dead were originally designed for arcades by Sega's acclaimed AM1 studio. We sat down with longtime series director Takashi Oda to discuss the franchise's origins, the differences in developing an arcade game and a console game, and the best plan for survival in the event of a real zombie apocalypse.**

**NINTENDO POWER First, can you detail for us how The House of the Dead series came about? Where did the idea come from, and what were your sources of inspiration?**

**TAKASHI ODA** It started very simply—we needed to make an arcade shooting game. With that we started looking at psycho thrillers that were popular in Japan at the time and other TV dramas. From there we got the idea that it would be better to make a game that is horror based in something that had the possibility of happening; rather than ghosts or monsters, we wanted enemies that were humanoid in shape.

**What would you say are the defining characteristics of the franchise?**

The ability to mix both fear and exhilaration in gameplay. Also, having realistic enemies attack you in a variety of ways; that keeps you on the edge of your seat.

**The series' main protagonist is mysteriously referred to as "G." We've gotta know: what does *G* stand for?**

He continues to be referred to as "G" and his history is still shrouded in mystery.

**The House of the Dead is that rare arcade franchise that has endured after all these years. Why do you think that is?**

We're very pleased to hear that fans still enjoy the series and that it has stood the test of time. We've tried to keep the game from getting complicated; rather we have always thought to keep it simple with pick-up-and-play game mechanics while trying to deliver something, even if it is one big thing, that really makes the player jump.

**What do you think is the key to making a good light-gun game?**

The key point is the reaction to shooting and being shot; making sure that the reaction matches or exceeds the expectation. The other element is making sure that the pacing and tempo engage a player fully.

**How have you had to adjust your development philosophies since Sega's arcade heyday? What are the main differences between developing an arcade title and a console game?**

The main philosophy hasn't changed over the years, and that is, it needs to surprise and entertain the player. With creating arcade games, it also has the advantage of the machine cabinet that goes with the game and being able to create something that uses the cabinet and the graphics to create an experience.

**What's your favorite zombie movie and why?**

*The Evil Dead*. It caused a lot of nightmares for me when I was a kid. It is certainly the first thing I think of when someone mentions zombies. The movie version of *The House of the Dead* was "special."

**If the zombie apocalypse were to occur in real life, what measures would you take to ensure your survival?**

Run away like they do in all the movies. I'm not going to stand up and be a hero like [in] the games. I'd be beaten down really fast if I did. [Laughs]

**Any chance you could give us a hint as to your team's next project?**

We're currently working on finishing up the Rambo arcade game, and as the title suggests, it is fully licensed. It certainly will provide different types of thrills, so please, check it out!

# REACH FOR THE STARS

**Kirby returns from a long absence in Kirby Super Star Ultra, breathing new life into the SNES classic with more than 12 different games.**

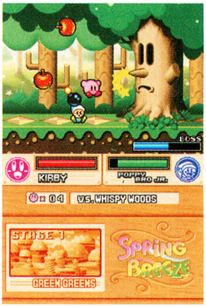
Though it was released 14 years ago, Kirby Super Star is still considered one of the pink puffball's best, thanks in no small part to the fact that it included nine games on one cartridge, which allowed for varied gameplay and hours of adventure. The SNES original has been one of the most-requested games for the Virtual Console (a tip of the hat to everyone who voted for it in our poll), but Nintendo has done us one better with Kirby Super Star Ultra on DS, a reimagining of the original that's slated for a September release.

Kirby Super Star Ultra contains all of the games from the original Kirby Super Star, enhanced with beautiful new graphics and animations, as well as touch-screen functionality for some of them. On top of that, the game features two brand-new adventure modes and two new arena modes, bringing the total number of subgames to 13. On the following pages we'll dig into all nine returning challenges (and their difficulty levels; each game is rated out of seven stars) as well as the brand-new touch-screen minigames.

BY TOM HOLOIEN

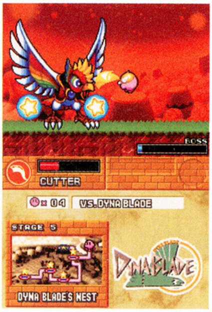
## SPRING BREEZE

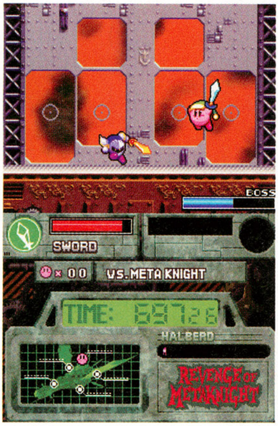
A condensed version of Kirby's original adventure, Kirby's Dream Land for Game Boy, Spring Breeze is intended to give you a healthy dose of nostalgia while familiarizing you with Kirby Super Star Ultra's gameplay mechanics. King Dedede's stolen all the food from Dream Land, and it's up to Kirby to get it back, defeating the King and his minions in the process. With a difficulty of only one star and a play time of 15-30 minutes, Spring Breeze isn't very taxing; it's a good place to start, especially if you haven't played any Kirby games before.



## DYNA BLADE

The giant armored bird named Dyna Blade destroys Dream Land's crops, and Kirby takes it upon himself to investigate. At three stars, this game is a tad more challenging and gives you a longer adventure than Spring Breeze (offering five stages, compared to Spring Breeze's four). By the time you're done with it you should be pretty comfortable with the game's controls and mechanics. Though it starts slow, Dyna Blade is challenging at times, and it's a good idea to play through it before moving on to the tougher games.


BOSS
CUTTER
×04
VS. DYNA BLADE
STAGE 5
DYNA BLADE'S NEST
DYNA BLADE

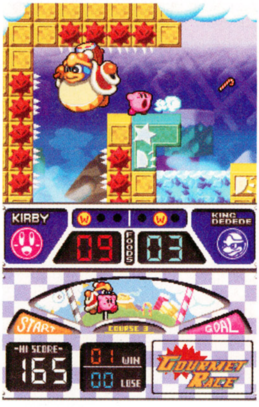

BOSS
SWORD
×00
VS. META KNIGHT
TIME:
HALBERD
REVENGE OF META KNIGHT

## REVENGE OF META KNIGHT

Think you have what it takes to destroy the Halberd? Revenge of Meta Knight has four-star difficulty, and it's not a cakewalk—especially since you're racing a timer in every stage, and if you don't get through it in time you'll lose a life. Moving stages and stages with extreme wind are the norm, and the pace is much more frantic than the previous games. Meta Knight and his subordinates' commentary as you dismantle their ship bit-by-bit is priceless, and the final swordfight with Meta Knight is epic. This is definitely one of the highlights of the title.

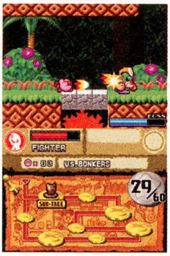
## GOURMET RACE

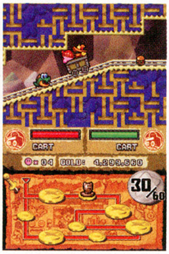
Gourmet Race feels more like a minigame than a full-fledged game. It pits you against King Dedede (or another player over a wireless connection) as you race through three stages, gathering as much food as possible along the way. You get points for reaching the finish line first and for each food item you collect, and whoever has the most points at the end wins. At two stars, it's not particularly tough and it's over quickly, though it adds replayability through a time-trial mode in which you can set ghost records and race against them. It's a nice break between adventures, but probably not the mode you'll play the most.


KIRBY
KING DEDEDE
09
FOODS
03
START
COURSE 3
GOAL
HI SCORE
165
01 WIN
00 LOSE
GOURMET RACE

## GREAT CAVE OFFENSIVE

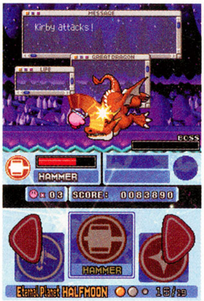
The first game to offer a real challenge, Great Cave Offensive comes in at four stars and introduces some advanced enemies and environmental elements, such as wind. Unlike the previous two games, which had you playing through a few stages to reach the final boss, the goal of Great Cave Offensive is not to defeat an enemy but to collect as many of the 60 treasure chests hidden throughout the game as possible. It takes multiple playthroughs and backtracking to find them all, but it's worth it to discover gems like a Koopa Shell from the Mario universe, a DK barrel, and the Triforce from the Zelda series. Don't be surprised if you spend hours on this one.


BOSS
FIGHTER
×03
VS. BONKERS
SUN-TREE
29/60


CART
CART
×04
GOLD: 4,299,660
30/60

## MILKY WAY WISHES

The final adventure game from the original Kirby Super Star, Milky Way Wishes offers a twist on the gameplay you've gotten used to: rather than stealing powers from enemies, Kirby must find the Copy Essences Deluxe that are scattered throughout each stage; they allow him to access those powers at any time through the touch screen or the pause menu. With Kirby trying to settle a dispute between the sun and the moon, you'll travel to different planets, each of which has a theme, such as fire, ice, or water, and you'll face an appropriate boss at the end of each. Though it's rated five stars, Milky Way Wishes is easier than it seems since extra lives are plentiful and you can call on helpers at any time using your Copy Essences, but that doesn't take away from its fun factor.



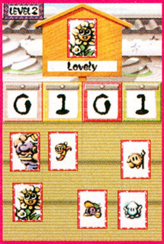
Kirby attacks!

MESSAGE
GREAT DRAGON
LIFE
BOSS
HAMMER
×03
SCORE: 0083890
HAMMER
Eternal Planet HALFMOON
18/19

STARSHIP
×03
SCORE: 0003500
HAMMER
Galactic Nova

## THE NEW MINIGAMES

Whether you just need a quick fix or want to face your friends in single-card wireless play, these all-new touch-screen minigames will satisfy your Kirby cravings.

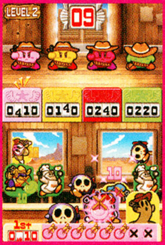


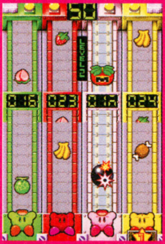
### KIRBY CARD SWIPE

A few cards appear on the touch screen and a card is flipped on the upper screen. The first player to tap the matching card on the bottom wins the round; the first to three wins the game. This is one of the hardest minigames, since it requires you to watch both screens at once.

### KIRBY ON THE DRAW

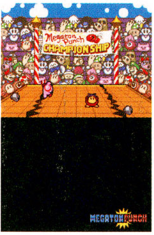
Reminiscent of a shooting gallery, Kirby on the Draw has all four players (or CPU players) tapping targets on the touch screen to earn points. Watch out for bombs, which will cost you 50 points—and probably the win if you're on higher difficulty settings.





### SNACK TRACKS

Tap harmful objects that are moving down the conveyor belt toward Kirby's mouth before he eats them, but let the food through. Bombs, rocks, and bugs will all stun Kirby for a bit, so get rid of them. Bombs jump to the other players' tracks, allowing you to disrupt their flow while helping yourself.

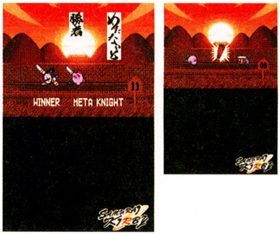


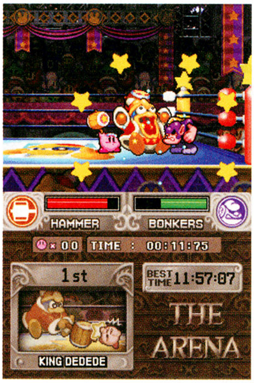
### MEGATON PUNCH

This classic minigame is a test of timing, and you'll be tasked with pulling off three button presses as accurately as possible in order to deliver the most powerful blow to some cement blocks (and the planet underneath). As the only minigame that isn't reaction-based, it's a fun change of pace, and cameos from the cast of Mario in the crowd are a nice touch.

### SAMURAI KIRBY

Face off samurai-style against increasingly tough enemies (or a friend) in a quick-draw reflex game. Your characters will face each other, music will play, and then an exclamation point will appear, after which the first person to hit a button wins. Samurai Meta Knight (Meta Samurai?) is particularly cool.





### THE ARENA

The Arena presents a supreme challenge: face all 19 bosses from the other six games back-to-back, with only one life, a helper character, and a handful of Maxim Tomatoes to help you along. Though you get a choice of power-ups at the beginning, after that you'll be offered two random ones after each boss, which often forces you to choose between spending a healing item or taking a less desirable power-up to keep your helper character alive. This one earns all six of its difficulty stars, and it's definitely not for the faint of heart.

**WE WANTED TO REVEAL EVERYTHING** there is to know about Kirby Super Star Ultra, but King Dedede threatened to crunch our noggins with his mallet if we didn't leave a few surprises. What we couldn't show you are the Revenge of the King mode, the Meta Knightmare Ultra mode, and two new Arena modes, which provide some of the game's toughest challenges. Kirby Super Star Ultra is far from a simple remake—the new content alone could have been a standalone release. The best part? The game is designed as a title that everybody can enjoy; though it starts off easy, the last few games present a challenge to even the most seasoned video game veterans. Nintendo seems to have created a game with near-universal appeal, and we can't wait to see the final product.

2K SPORTS
AVAILABLE NOW
GET YOUR GAME FACE ON.*
*MOUTHS AND NOSES NOT REQUIRED.
PREPARE FOR THE BIG LEAGUES!
OK
BATTING
FIELDING
PITCHING
BRK BALL
RUNNING
TECHNIQUE
CANCEL
REST
AUTOMATIC
GROUP
A.Rodriguez
H.Matsui
B.Abreu
SPACE
PWR
PRACTICING
CAN PRACTICE AS A GROUP 2 LEFT
HELP
CHANGE INTO GROUP
MULTIPLE SELECTIONS
SWITCH INFO
PLAY WITH THE PROS.
LIVE THE MLB® LIFE.
PowerPros
MLB
Tue. 3/ 4/2008
Money $ 30,600
PowerPros
FORWARD
FAST DISPLAY
SKIP
HISTORY
MLB POWER PROS 2008
www.2ksports.com/games/mlbpp2008
EVERYONE
E
Visit www.esrb.org for rating information
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
PLAYERS CHOICE
KONAMI
PlayStation®2
NINTENDO DS
Wii

Taking my prized
Golf Clubs(Steel) with me,
I went out to practice some golf!

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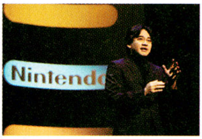
# the big 15



The recent Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) gave publishers a chance to show off the latest and greatest games that are headed to Nintendo systems in the coming months—some new, some improved, and some completely unexpected. We sifted through the cavalcade of titles to pick the top 15 games we're most excited about for the remainder of 2008 and beyond.

BY JUSTIN CHENG, CHRIS HOFFMAN & STEVE THOMASON

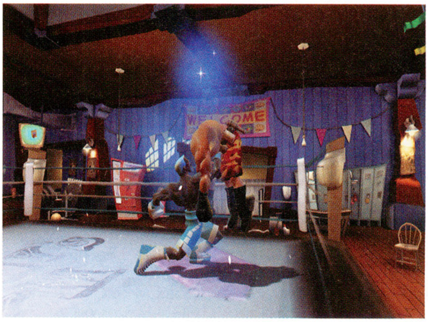
# Facebreaker KO Party

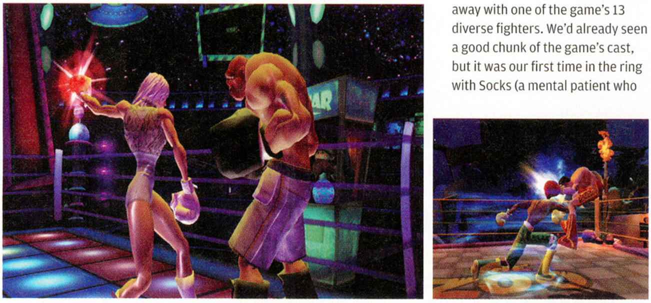
15

When we first saw the Wii version of Facebreaker a few months ago, it looked very promising. Now that we've been able to play it, that promise seems ever closer to being fulfilled. Facebreaker KO Party (as it's now known) certainly delivers when it comes to pick-up-and-play arcade-style boxing—we had no problem easing into the accessible controls and engaging in a knock-down drag-out slugfest. Intuitive punching motions with the nunchuk and remote let you throw high left and right jabs at your opponent's face, and by holding down B while swinging you can strike your opponent's body. Other moves are just as simple—you hold A and swing for a haymaker, hold Z to block, and raise either the remote or nunchuk over your shoulder to charge up for a powerful hit. If you want to get fancy, you can block while charging, which lets you parry an opponent's attack.

It all becomes second nature as soon as you step into one of the colorful arenas and start slugging away with one of the game's 13 diverse fighters. We'd already seen a good chunk of the game's cast, but it was our first time in the ring with Socks (a mental patient who wears good and evil sock puppets as boxing gloves), Sparrow (a speedy female fighter pilot), Steve (a self-taught fighter who learned to compete by watching TV; he uses the Crane Kick from *The Karate Kid*), Kiriko (a raver girl), and Tiki (a monkey).

As you pummel your opponent, a meter fills up that lets you execute four levels of Breaker punches, ranging from the Bonebreaker to the Facebreaker (which, although it uses your entire special meter, instantly KOs your opponent if it connects). Our only concern about the game is that throws (accomplished by pressing the remote's Control Pad) seem a little cheap. Nonetheless, we had a blast, and that's without experiencing the full extent of the multiplayer options—something we intend to explore in depth as the game's release draws closer.



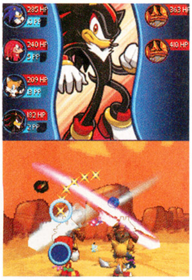


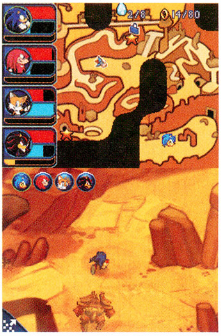
When you throw a party, it usually doesn't involve punching your friends in the face (at least we hope not). But that's what Facebreaker KO Party is all about—complete with stylized fighters and bone-crushing blows.

## Sonic Chronicles: The Dark Brotherhood

14

With its release just around the corner, Sonic's RPG debut seems to be coming together quite nicely. The game takes a fairly traditional approach to the genre, but the distinctiveness of each character in your party lends it considerable depth, both while exploring the world and when engaged in battle. In typical BioWare fashion, you've also got lots of customization options when it comes to building your party, from choosing which special moves your characters learn to nurturing critters called Chaos that bestow your fighters with various bonuses. The biggest question that remains is how the story will shape up, but we're optimistic given BioWare's track record and the quality of the writing we've seen so far.



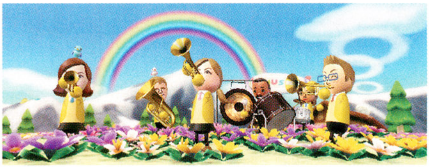


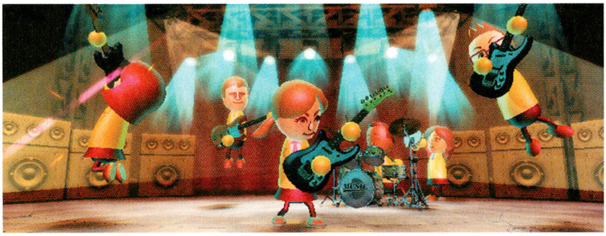
# Wii Music

**13**

Wii Music isn't really a video game—at least, not in the traditional sense. The gameplay is fairly simple—just shake your remote or press the remote's buttons to start playing your instruments (over 50 in all). It's a lot like playing air guitar: you approximate the appropriate action, even if you have no idea how to really play the instrument. To play the saxophone, for example, you press the 1 and 2 Buttons (putting the remote up to your face to complete the simulation is up to you). Don't worry about timing or accuracy—just play for the fun of it. Unlike games like Guitar Hero or Rock Band, Wii Music is all about playing an instrument without the anxiety that comes with trying to perform as perfectly as possible. It's an experience that all kinds of people can enjoy (up to four players at once). This accessibility is further underscored by the track list, which includes public domain tunes, licensed hits, and Nintendo game favorites. With 50 songs such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," "From the New World," "Turkey in the Straw," "Yankee Doodle," and "Super Mario Bros.," there's something for everyone.

In addition to jamming, other modes let you ring handbells, conduct an orchestra, and play with a virtual drum kit. The latter allows you to attach a nunchuk and hook up a Wii Balance Board to get the full effect. By pressing buttons or hitting different directions on your Control Pad or stick, you select which drums and cymbals you hit, while stepping on the Balance Board to hit the kick drum or open and close the hi-hat.



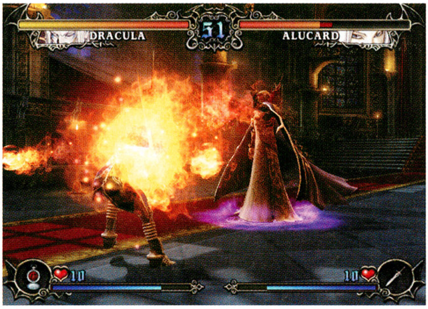


# Castlevania Judgment

**12**

We know—the idea of a Castlevania fighting game is kind of weird. But now that we've had some hands-on time with Castlevania Judgment, we're fairly convinced that the game is going to be a lot of fun, even if it's not exactly what fans of the series are used to. We put Simon Belmont, Maria Renard, and Alucard through their paces in head-to-head combat, and as producer Koji Igarashi predicted, it was a natural fit to crack Simon's whip or swing Alucard's sword by gesturing with the Wii remote. The action is amazingly fast-paced—the battles are basically bouts of controlled chaos as you and your opponent run around the arena, smashing open candles, collecting power-ups, tossing subweapons (such as the cross boomerang or holy water), and unleashing melee combos and special attacks to send each other into the afterlife. We didn't have a chance to get into the nuances of combat, but this is definitely not a shallow waggle-fest; blocking is essential. In fact, that was once of our few criticisms of the game in its early form—it seems to favor defensive players. Beyond providing solid action, Judgment also offers some of the best visuals we've yet seen on Wii, and the inclusion of fantastic remixes of classic Castlevania tunes never hurts.

ALUCARD
76
SIMON
2 HITS



MARIA
09
SIMON

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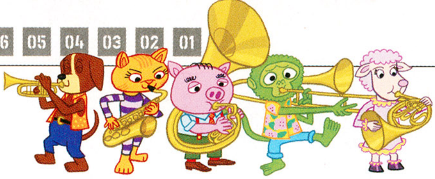


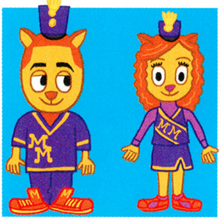
# Major Minor's Majestic March

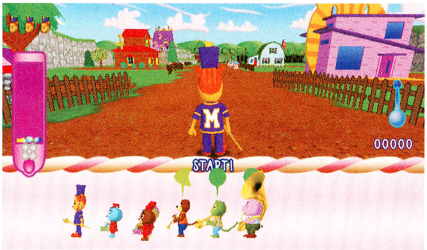
11

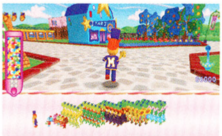
For the first time in more than six years, game designer/musician Masaya Matsuura and artist Rodney Alan Greenblat—the creative team behind PaRappa the Rapper—have joined forces to bring us another delightfully weird music game. Due this holiday season, Major Minor's Majestic March has players wielding the Wii remote like a conductor's baton, leading their marching band through a variety of whimsical locales and recruiting additional musicians along the way for a more robust performance. Skeptical that such a game can stand out in today's crowded rhythm genre? To quote the sage advice of a certain rhyme-busting canine, "You gotta believe!"

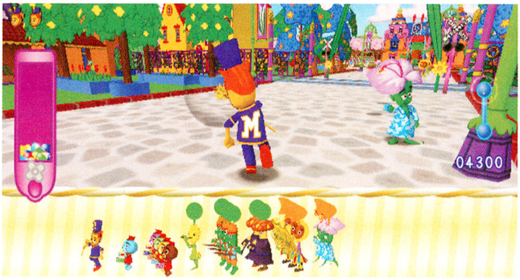
Having finally had a chance to take up the baton for ourselves at E3, we came away completely charmed. Each parade begins with you establishing your desired tempo by swinging the remote up and down. You can set it as slowly or as quickly as you like (within reason), but you then have to maintain that tempo as consistently as possible throughout the stage (an onscreen metronome is there to help the rhythmically challenged). As you march along, you'll come across potential band members you can add to your ensemble by flicking the remote in their direction. Each new recruit impressively adds another layer to the song in real time, and you can assemble more than 50 performers with 15 different instruments. The larger your procession, the more rousing the experience, which makes giving yourself over to the game difficult to resist no matter how goofy you might look while playing. If you mess up or your rhythm becomes unstable, your band will start to get confused and certain members may eventually drop out. Fortunately, your cavalcade has quite the sweet tooth, and you can get them back on track by handing out jellybeans you find along the road. We told you it was weird.

It's also pretty simple at this point, but the developers promise to keep us marching with more than 30 tunes from around the world, as well as additional gameplay elements such as obstacles that need to be avoided, baton-twirling intermissions, and two-player festivities. Now if only they could include Wii Balance Board support.

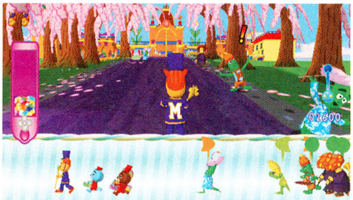








Like PaRappa, Major Minor's Majestic March isn't exactly a technical marvel, but Greenblat's whimsical art gives it a certain visual appeal.



## Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars

10

Arguably, the biggest bombshell dropped at Nintendo's pre-E3 press conference was that Rockstar is bringing the insanely popular Grand Theft Auto series to the DS this winter. Details are still scarce, but we know that Chinatown Wars is set in Liberty City (the locale made famous by most of the numbered entries in the series) and boasts new characters and an all-new engine, along with the free-form gameplay that fans of the series have come to expect. That's enough to get us—and millions of hardcore gamers—extremely excited.

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# Wii Sports Resort

09

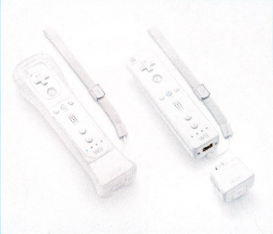
There's no denying the immense popularity of Wii Sports. Responsible for selling millions of Wii consoles, the original Wii Sports offered accessible, responsive pick-up-and-play fun for casual and hardcore gamers alike. The sequel, Wii Sports Resort, is primed to do the same when it launches next spring. As its name implies, the game revolves around an island-vacation theme, and it offers more than 10 fun-in-the-sun events with which you can test your skills. But Wii Sports Resort isn't just more of the same with a tropical tan—thanks to the new Wii MotionPlus peripheral that's included with the game (see sidebar), you'll be able to perform actions that are more accurate and true-to-life than ever before.

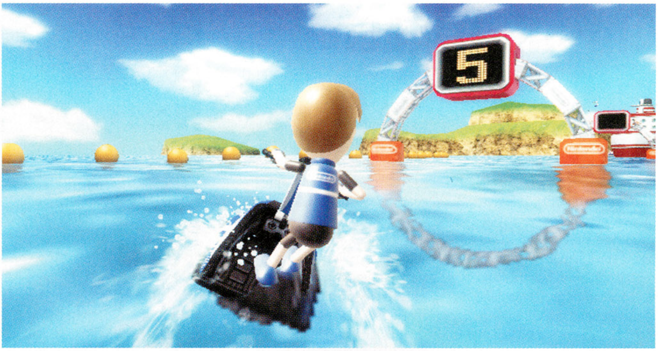
Of the three events revealed for Wii Sports Resort thus far, Disc Dog is probably the most relaxing. The gameplay couldn't be simpler—after grabbing your Frisbee-style flying disc from your pooch (who you might recognize from Wii Fit) with the A Button, you simply pull your hand back and flick it forward to toss the disc in the desired direction. Your puppy pal will rush out and attempt to grab the disc out of the air; the closer you get to your designated target, the more points you'll earn. What impressed us the most about Disc Dog is how responsive it was; by mimicking real-life motions, you can throw the disc any way you want—even straight up or right into the ground (but don't expect to score any points that way).

Also on display was Power Cruising, a jet-ski racing challenge in which your goal is to success-

## Wii MotionPlus

**Wii Sports Resort comes bundled with the next technological leap in motion-based gaming: Wii MotionPlus. The Wii MotionPlus peripheral is a small attachment that plugs into the end of the Wii remote and enhances the hardware's motion-sensing capabilities with a device called a gyroscope, which reads rotation in any direction. Combined with the existing technology in the Wii sensor bar and remote (which reads acceleration and linear movement in any direction), Wii MotionPlus makes it possible to replicate almost any real-life movement of the remote with amazing accuracy. Events in the first Wii Sports, such as baseball, did a good job of emulating one-to-one motions, but our experience with Wii MotionPlus indicates that the technology takes things to an all-new level of immersion. Wii MotionPlus isn't backward-compatible with games not designed for use with the unit, but it is designed with forward-thinking flexibility in mind—the accessory has an additional port on the end so you can use it with the nunchuk and other peripherals. In addition to the add-on itself, Wii Sports Resort will include an extended Wii remote jacket to fit the expanded controller.**

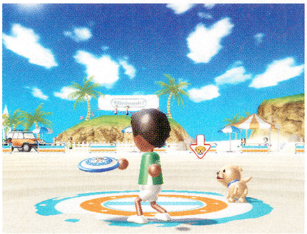




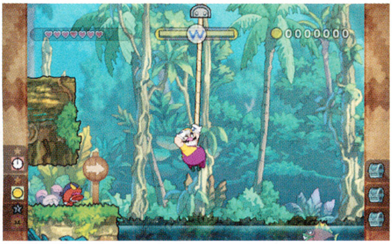
fully navigate a course through a series of checkpoints. To play the game, you hold the remote and nunchuk sideways like handlebars and turn them to steer, and you twist the remote like a throttle to activate a speed boost. With the lead programmer of Wave Race 64 working on Wii Sports Resort, Power Cruising is full of potential.

The last (but not least) of the events we tried was Sword Play, a two-person sword duel in which you wail on your opponent until he plummets into the sparkling blue water below. Wii owners have been hoping for a sword-fighting game that features one-to-one responsiveness and reads every nuanced motion you make, and Sword Play delivers—you can swing at any angle, and your on-screen character will mimic the same motion. But Sword Play isn't just about wildly attacking (as the NP staff learned the hard way after we tired ourselves out with several minutes of relentless offense); it's about watching your opponent, holding the B Button to block their attacks, and striking when you see an opening.

These three events are just the beginning—several others have yet to be revealed, including multiplayer events for up to four players. Some of the multiplayer activities won't require the Wii MotionPlus attachment, so your technologically impaired friends can still get in on the action.



Disc Dog really demonstrates the new level of control afforded by the Wii MotionPlus attachment. Go catch it, pooch!



## Wario Land: Shake It!

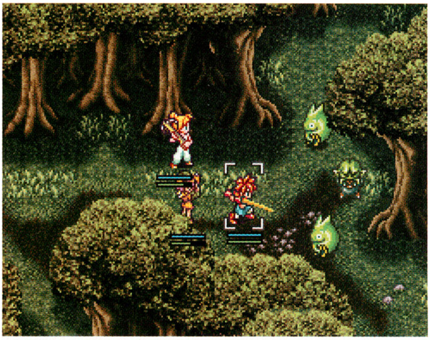
08

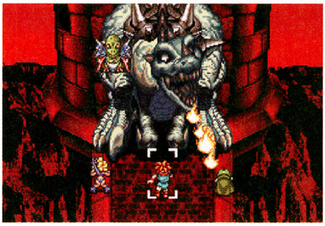
With Nintendo focused primarily on the mass-market audience at E3, Wario's latest hijinks didn't get a lot of exposure. But we had so much fun with this beautifully hand-drawn platformer that we decided to put it on this month's cover. By injecting traditional side-scrolling action with inventive use of the Wii remote, Shake It! offers a joyous blend of old and new. For the full scoop, head to page 34.

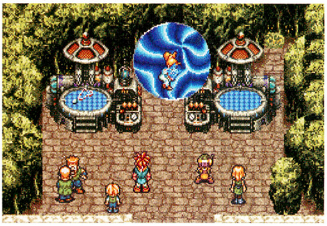
# Chrono Trigger

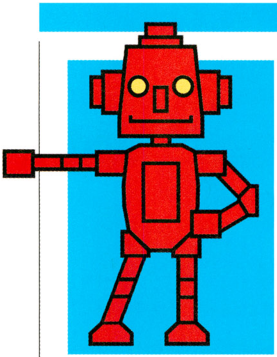
07

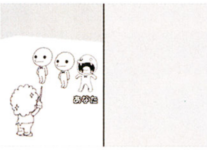
As soon as we heard that Chrono Trigger, one of the greatest RPGs of all time, was coming to DS we were thrilled; now that we've played it we're even more so. Though it's on the small screen, the game contains all the detailed visuals, deep gameplay, and compelling characters that made it so legendary on the SNES. Even the translation seems remarkably close to that of the original (which isn't a bad thing—the SNES version boasts some of the best writing of its era). Although these screenshots don't show it, the game also makes great use of the DS's lower screen—not only does it show a map of your current area (not that die-hard fans who've memorized every inch of the game will really need it), but it lets you move your characters via the touch screen during exploration and trigger battle commands during combat. Of course, if you prefer doing things the old-fashioned way you can always just play with the good ol' Control Pad and buttons. We're greatly looking forward to reacquainting ourselves with the heroic Crono, his perky friend Marle, scientific-minded Lucca, and their memorable assortment of allies in the months ahead.

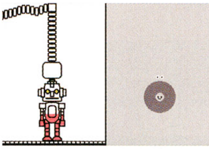


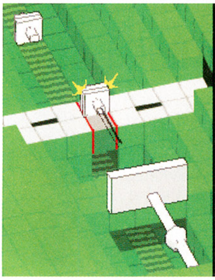


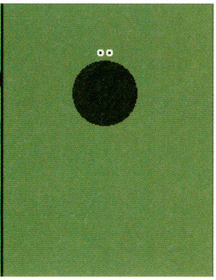












# Rhythm Heaven

06

The greatest Game Boy Advance title to never see the light of day on these shores was Rhythm Tengoku, a quirky and devilishly addictive piece of software from the folks who brought us WarioWare. Fortunately, it looks as if Nintendo is going to make it up to us by bringing the DS follow-up to North America later this year. Like its predecessor, Rhythm Heaven is a collection of rapid-fire, music-themed minigames that, while eminently simple, are overflowing with personality. Of the three challenges on display at E3 (the full game will include dozens), our favorite involved you "singing" as the third member of a chorus. You had to hold the stylus against the touch screen until it was your character's turn to belt out a hearty "LAAAAA!" then lift the stylus for just the right number of beats. If you messed up, the other disgruntled chorus members would shoot you a dirty look. It's humorous little touches like that, combined with some brilliantly creative play mechanics, that made us fall in love with the GBA original. And while it's too early to tell if the DS version will live up to those lofty standards, we're certainly encouraged by what we've played thus far.

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# Animal Crossing: City Folk

05

The original Animal Crossing proved to gamers that you don't need to save the world or rescue the princess to have fun—you can have a blast just decorating your home, designing new fashions, buying furniture, looking for seashells, catching bugs, or simply relaxing with friends during a holiday get-together. The latest installment of the hit series—titled Animal Crossing: City Folk—returns to that simple and care-free premise, only with a host of all-new features that build upon the series' underlying principles of creation, community, and calendar.

Like in previous Animal Crossing games, you're cast as the newcomer in town, but if you played previous titles in the series, you'll already feel at home as you engage in familiar activities that allow you to earn money, expand your house, associate with your neighbors, and beautify the town as you see fit. You'll get to use tools such as a shovel, an axe, a watering can, a fishing rod, and a slingshot, and thanks to the game's real-time clock, you'll get to partake of time-specific events (such as holidays) and make discoveries that occur only during certain seasons or times of day. Part of the joy of Animal Crossing is that there's always something new to discover.

Of course, there's plenty of new content as well. As you might guess from the game's title, there's a city that exists separate from your town, and you can travel there by bus for a number of reasons: you can go to Harriett's salon to get a new 'do or to put your Mii's face on your character, you can check out the latest fashions at Gracie's, you can visit the auction house to bid on items put up for sale by your friends, you can catch Dr. Shrunk's comedy show to learn new emotions, or you can see the hottest interior designs at the Happy Room Academy, for example. Although you can't interact with other players directly in the city, the urban locales let you see what your friends are up to in fresh and creative ways.

If you want to meet with other players face-to-face, however, you can do that, too—up to four friends can visit each other's towns over Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. What's more, you'll be able to talk and hang out as if you were all in the same room since City Folk will be the first game to support the new WiiSpeak microphone peripheral. Not your speed? Maybe typing messages using the game's USB keyboard support is for you. And you can do more than contact other Animal Crossing players—you can send messages to friends' email accounts and cell phones, and even attach pictures you've taken (via City Folk's new in-game photography feature) to show them what they're missing out on.

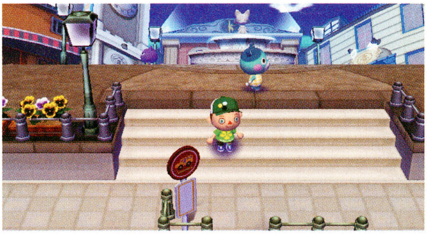
The potential of Animal Crossing: City Folk seems almost limitless, so we spoke to the game's producer (and series creator), Katsuya Eguchi, to find out what else he has in store.

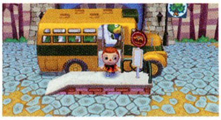
**NINTENDO POWER** **You recently said that creativity and communication were at the core of Animal Crossing. Can you elaborate on that and how it evolved into a game?**

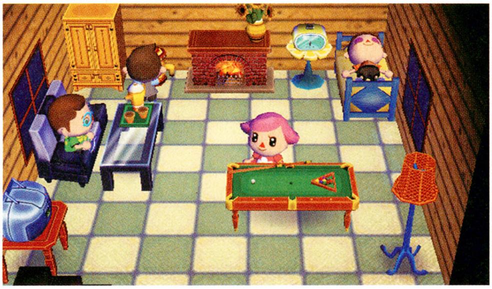
**KATSUYA EGUCHI** One of the things that I was looking at when coming up with the idea behind Animal Crossing was basically a situation where I had time to play games or do activities by myself, and then there were times with the family, but I needed a bridge between the two.... I was looking to create some vehicle by which I could maybe create something and then they could go in and take a look at what I'd done, or we could have a shared experience even if it wasn't at the same time.

**If you just sat down for the first time and started playing Animal Crossing: City Folk, what are the first things you'd do?**

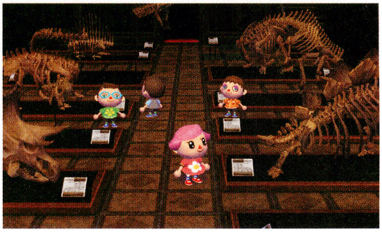
You start off on a bus. It's the same beginning that you see in the other [games in the] series in that you're







The bright city lights beckon in Animal Crossing: City Folk, with all-new places to see, things to do, and critters to meet.



on your way into town. You're moving into town. It's what you'd expect: you're on the bus, you get asked a bunch of questions—you know, what's your name, where are you moving, that sort of same initial setup. You move in, you choose the location of where your house will be, you go to work for Tom Nook—it's the same initial setup that you're used to with Animal Crossing.

**What would you, personally, do as a player once you're past that setup?**
I would probably travel to the city and I'd go into Harriet's, a salon, and then I'd put on my Mii mask, and then I would come back.... Once I've done that, it's mine. I can take it off, I can put it back on—depending on what my mood was—and my feeling is that when my friends came to visit, rather than my Animal Crossing character, I'd put my Mii face on so I could play as me with my friends.

**So the big new thing in City Folk is obviously the city. What can you tell us about it?**
The city, the image that we've built this [game] upon, is a place where players go in, not at the same time, but consecutively, not simultaneously. And one of the ways that they will interact with players within the city area is through the auction house. The auction house is a place where you can go and you can take an item that you wish to sell. You go into the auction house and you give it to them and they place it up on display. And then other players, as they visit, can go into the auction house and they will say, "Oh, look! Here's item whatever-it-is! I've always wanted that!" And they'll put a bid in. And other players as they come in, again, consecutively, can go into the auction house and people can start a bidding war on a particular item.

And the other way that players can see what other players around the globe are doing is the Happy Room Academy showroom. And basically the showroom is a place to display rooms that have received high scores from the Happy Room Academy. So the Happy Room Academy will choose a room based on the scores and they will display that exact room within the Happy Room Academy showroom. So you're able to go in and the person who's attending the showroom—it's Lyle, who was actually the insurance salesman in the last game—he will say, "And today in the Happy Room Academy Showroom we're featuring the room from so-and-so in Animal Town." So in that sort of way you can see what other people are doing with some of the more creative room-designing aspects of the game.

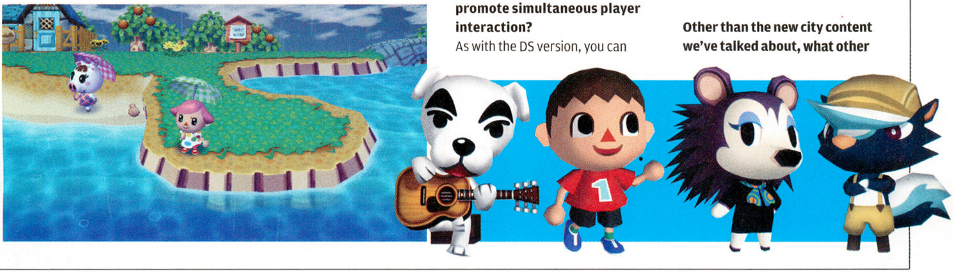
[The city] is a place for people who you have registered as Wii Friends—and those are ones that you are able to send messages through the Wii message board—if you both have Animal Crossing.

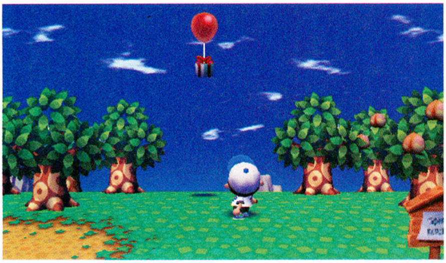
**What parts of the game promote simultaneous player interaction?**
As with the DS version, you can have visitors come to your actual town. Including yourself, you can have up to four people wandering around the town.

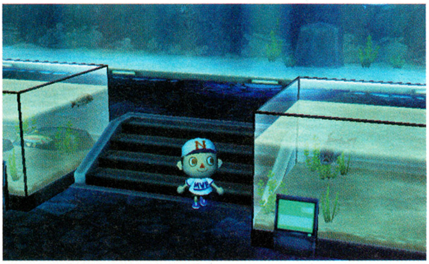
**Why do you feel that this is an ideal title to come out simultaneously with the WiiSpeak microphone?**
Well, you know, one of the things about Animal Crossing is that you go to all of the trouble of designing your home or laying out your village to the extent of [placing] your flowers and trees and whatnot to customize your village. And when people come to visit, you want to know what they think. And up until this point you could, of course, send a letter saying, "I like this," but WiiSpeak allows you the opportunity to have that sort of feedback in real time.

And I'd consider Animal Crossing to be a very relaxed, sort of informal experience. And, of course, human dialogue can be just that, in that without any sort of preparation or anything like that you just talk with people and tell them what you feel and what you're thinking, and WiiSpeak allows you to have that really informal, spontaneous interaction with people inside of a game that embodies that same sort of spirit. We thought it was a really good marriage between the hardware and the software.

**Other than the new city content we've talked about, what other**







**new activities can you do in the game?**
Well, I think one of the big things this time is the ability to take photos inside the game. Now, of course, you can take those photos and you can attach them to letters and you can send them to your friends. But you can also save them to an SD card and then take that SD card over to your computer. You can print out the photos that you've taken. Anything that you could do with information off an SD card now you can do [with in-game photos].

Plus, you know, there are new and/or returning events. Some of the events that were in the GameCube version that we did not put in the DS version are back. So there are just a lot of things to do. We have Jingle, the reindeer, that shows up in the winter holiday. Zipper T. Bunny is a rabbit that comes and visits, and he buries Bunny Day eggs [on] Bunny Day. And there's also a carnival event that takes place. We've got a new character associated with that and new things that happen in town. I think some of these new events are really a lot of fun....

**Speaking of returning characters, is pretty much everyone returning from previous games?**
Yes, they're all back. There are some new ones as well, along with some of the familiar faces you've seen.

**How will it take advantage of the Wii controls? Will there be motion-based fishing or digging?**
As far as motion-sensor controls, we're still looking at some of the implementations of that, so right now we don't have [anything to say about] what the motion control will do in the game. Right now we have two control schemes. One is with the Wii remote and the nunchuk.... Or you can play with just the Wii remote...and that's a point-driven control scheme.

**Will there be downloadable content?**
That's a great question. I was looking forward to that question! We're thinking of having a service where you can download new furniture, new wallpaper designs, new flooring designs, and that sort of thing. And that's not content that is already hidden on the disc and must be unlocked; this is absolutely new content we'd be creating after the launch that you could download as the game progresses.

**Will it fall into the Pay & Play category or will it be free?**
This is a free service. If you buy the software, we're not going to make you purchase anything else.

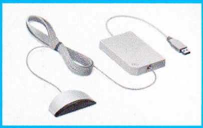
**Will City Folk interact with Wild World in any way?**
Actually, one of the things you can do is, if you played the DS version of Animal Crossing, you can actually take the character that you played throughout that game and have that character move in and be your character in the Wii version. One other thing you can do with the DS and Wii this time is—let's say you're not connected to the Internet with your Wii—you can actually take your travel data and download it to your DS. Another thing you can do with the DS—we'd mentioned earlier downloadable content, say, new furniture. You'll be able to take the DS to one of the service areas and download new content that way. We're definitely moving forward with that in Japan.

**How would you say City Folk compares to your original vision for Animal Crossing? Are the new features things that you'd wanted to do all along?**
I think the original idea that started Animal Crossing and what we have now are fairly different things. But once we actually created the first version of Animal Crossing, I think each iteration has been a natural progression in that evolution of the franchise. So this time with Animal Crossing: City Folk we've been able to take some of the things like, for example, voice chat. Now with WiiSpeak we've been able to put that in. Some of the more creative aspects—we want to make it easier to create different things. Well, with the Wii remote functionality and the ability of creating patterns in different sections, all of these things are natural progressions and ideas we've had every time, and it's just now easier for us to do.

**Is there anything else our readers should know about the game?**
You've pretty much drawn out everything that I had! I can't really think of anything else at the moment.

## WiiSpeak

**Although Animal Crossing: City Folk isn't bundled with the WiiSpeak USB microphone, the game and the peripheral will go hand in hand, as WiiSpeak will let players talk with each other in real time as they visit each other's towns over Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. What sets WiiSpeak apart from other video game microphones on the market is that it isn't designed for just a single user; it's built to sit somewhere in the room (such as on top of the Wii sensor bar) to allow entire groups of people to communicate back and forth. Look for WiiSpeak to be available this holiday season at the same time as Animal Crossing: City Folk, and to carry a suggested price of $29.99.**



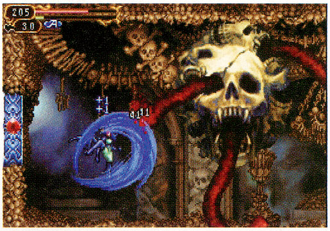
# Mega Man 9

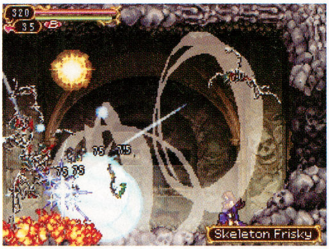
04

We still can't believe we're getting an NES-style Mega Man sequel. Hopefully this WiiWare title will be a massive hit, sparking other developers to follow in its footsteps. How awesome would a SNES-style Super Mario World 3 be? Or a Sonic the Hedgehog 4 based on Genesis specs? The mind boggles. To learn more about MM9, check out our interview with producer Hironobu Takeshita on page 20.

# Castlevania: Order of Ecclesia

03





She may not be a Belmont, but Shanoa is a total badass nonetheless.

The Castlevania series continues to be one of the best reasons to own a DS. Producer Koji Igarashi's team manages to crank out new installments with remarkable regularity, and while the games may not abound with innovation, they always deliver a top-notch adventure. Order of Ecclesia looks to be no different.

In case you missed our cover story in Volume 230, here's a quick recap. The game stars a raven-tressed heroine named Shanoa, charged by the titular Order with defeating Dracula in the mid 1800s. The reason Shanoa's the right woman for the job is that she alone can harness the energies of mystical objects called Glyphs. These mysterious sources of power are at the core of Ecclesia's gameplay and bestow Shanoa with myriad abilities, including some that manifest themselves as weapons. What we've seen thus far hints at the staggering armament variety we've come to expect from the series. There are Glyphs that function as rapiers, throwing knives, flaming swords, humongous spears, and something that looks like a machine gun. Furthermore, certain Glyphs endow Shanoa with powerful magic attacks, from lightning bolts to giant cyclones to barriers composed of revolving Medusa heads. A recent trailer even showed our protagonist using Glyphs to transform into a flying succubus, as well as a slinky catlike creature that could shred enemies with its claws.

Previous DS installments in the series have been among the most visually impressive on the handheld, but Order of Ecclesia raises the bar further. The game boasts improved animation quality, more-detailed backgrounds, and a new artist whose painterly character designs are a far better fit for the series' Gothic motif than were the generic anime-style illustrations of the last two games. With a soundtrack by famed series composer Michiru Yamane, the game should be equally pleasurable to the ears.

This classic series may not have changed much over the past few years, but like its iconic villain, we're always thirsty for more.

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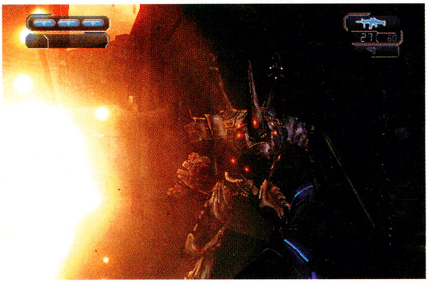
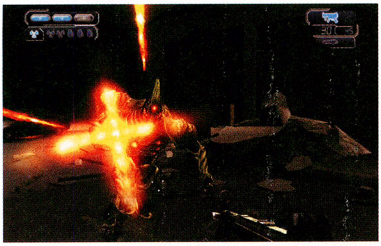
# The Conduit

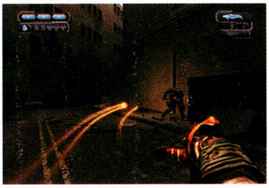
02

When the Wii controller was first unveiled, Nintendo proffered that one of the genres to benefit most from the device would be the first-person shooter. And we couldn't have agreed more. It's as close as you'll get to a mouse-and-keyboard setup while lounging on the sofa. But for whatever reason, the number of quality shooters released in the system's first year and a half can be counted on one hand. While the genre still felt underrepresented at this year's E3, there was a shining beacon of hope in the form of The Conduit.

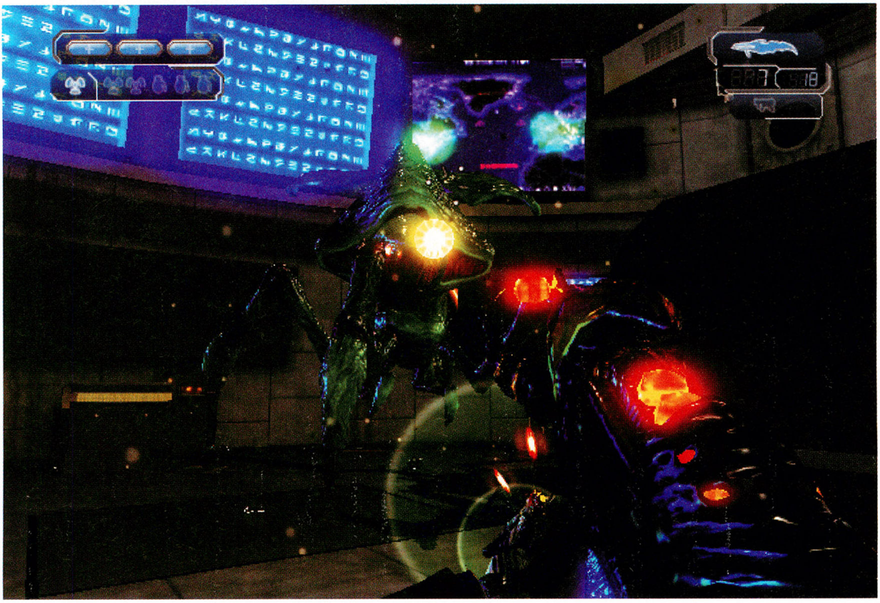


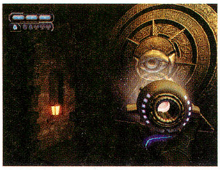
During our all-too-brief demo, it was clear that developer High Voltage Software is putting forth a serious effort to raise the bar for third-party Wii titles. To begin with, the game looks fantastic. As we battled through the war-torn streets of an alien-besieged Washington D.C. (more on that in a moment), we were consistently impressed by the complexity of the environments, the dramatic real-time lighting, and the bountiful use of normal mapping on all of the game's enemies and weapons. The animation quality was excellent as well, and the action typically moved at a solid 30 frames per second (the developers promise that the occasional hiccups we saw will be ironed out before release). In terms of visual fidelity, The Conduit demonstrates what the Wii hardware is capable of when placed in the right hands, and it puts most other non-Nintendo efforts to shame.

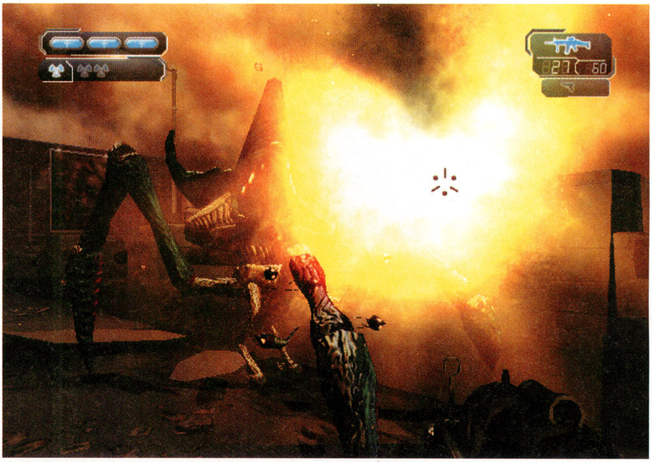




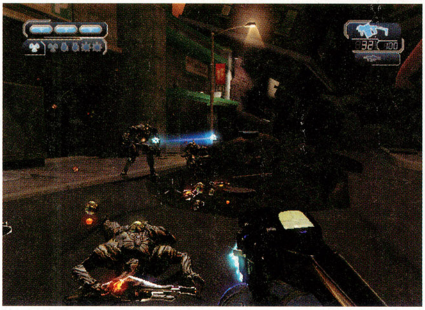
[Above] After firing this weapon, you can lead its ordnance via the Wii remote.







[Above] As with any great first-person shooter, things blow up real purdy in The Conduit.

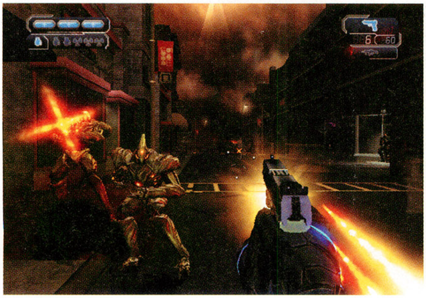


The other area in which the game truly stands out is the controls. Everything is fully customizable, including your turn speed, cursor sensitivity, and the size of your bounding box (the area in which you can aim your reticle without turning). Better yet, everything can be adjusted in real time; you simply bring up a graphical overlay and make the desired tweaks. Your changes are reflected immediately, making it quick and easy to find your personal sweet spot. Few, if any, console first-person shooters feel this good, and anyone else developing an FPS for Wii would be well advised to follow in High Voltage's footsteps.

Not that The Conduit isn't taking a few cues of its own from previous behemoths of the genre. Most notably, the game's sci-fi themes give off a strong Halo vibe. With Earth under attack by malicious alien forces, you play a somewhat mysterious hero tasked with kicking as much extraterrestrial ass as humanly possible. To accomplish that goal, you'll need to procure weapons on-site, and you can wield a variety of both human and alien armaments (though only two at a time). The developers aren't shy about the influence of Bungie's megahit series on their game and are quick to point out that Wii doesn't really have a comparable experience. It's a void they're eager to fill, and if you're going to borrow, you may as well borrow from the best.

At least the game's protagonist isn't a genetically enhanced supersoldier. Instead, the man known only as Mr. Ford is a former Secret Service agent who's been recruited into a clandestine organization called The Trust. As you might expect from the involvement of a secret government agency, the developers promise a story steeped in conspiracy and with plot twists around every corner. Fortunately for him, Mr. Ford has the All-Seeing Eye, a powerful artifact capable of revealing otherwise-invisible objects, including hidden traps, cloaked enemies, and the keys to many of the game's puzzles.

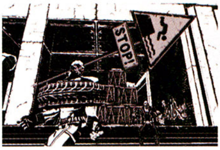
Though it already feels like it's pretty far along, The Conduit isn't due to hit stores until March 2009. High Voltage will use the intervening months to polish the single-player game and work on delivering the most robust online offering available on Wii (their current goals include supporting 16 players at once). The studio has yet to sign with a publisher for the title, but it has the resources to finish development on its own, allowing the creative team the freedom to make the game they want to make. And a game we want to play.

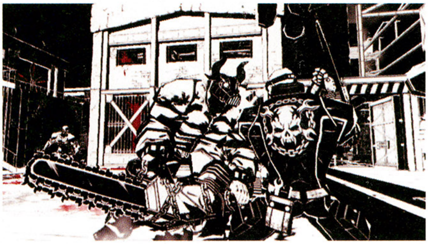


Why can't more Wii games look this good? High Voltage has thrown down the gauntlet.

# MadWorld

01





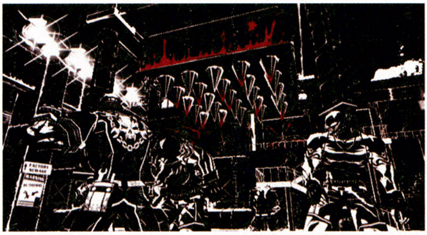
Core gamers looking for something to latch onto, this is it. A stylish, gruesome, hilariously over-the-top M-rated action romp from the brilliantly disturbed minds at PlatinumGames (Okami, Viewtiful Joe), MadWorld is the Wii title we continue to yearn for more than any other. Though the demo at E3 didn't reveal much in terms of new information, it did reaffirm our belief that the game will be completely awesome.

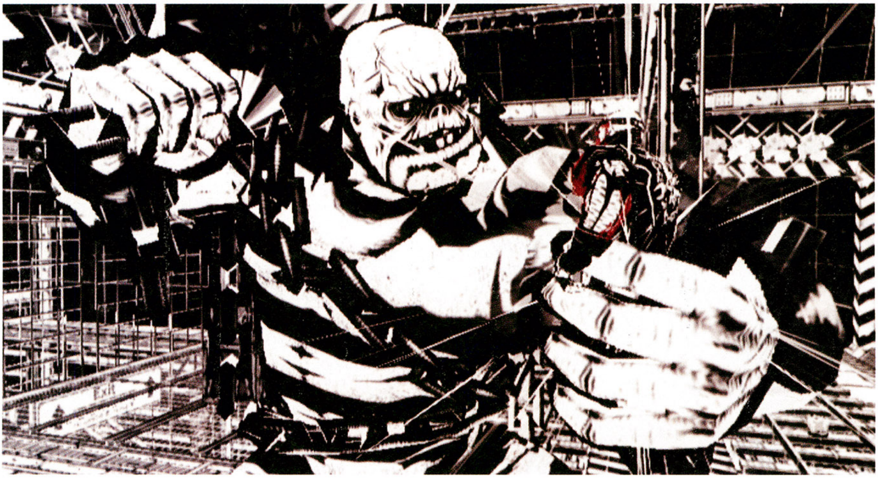
Perhaps what impressed us most is that protagonist Jack, who's a contestant on the brutal futuristic game show *Death Watch*, went through an entire level without dispatching any two enemies the same way. We witnessed a staggering number of context-sensitive finishing maneuvers in just that one locale, and Jack even showed off a couple of new WWE-inspired grappling moves, including a giant swing and a leaping, over-the-shoulder backbreaker.

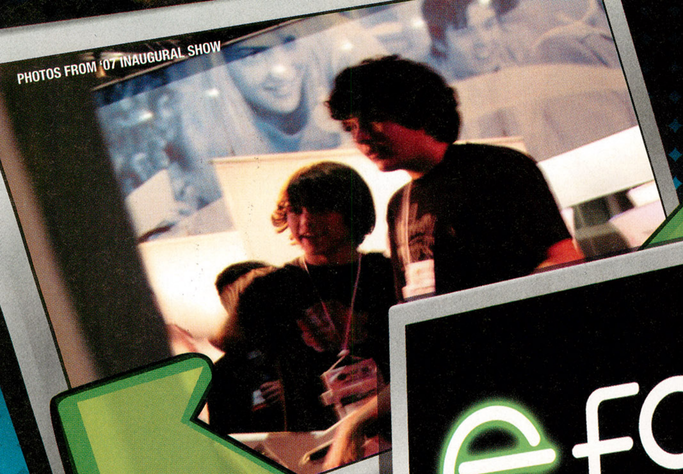
Of course, why settle for exterminating your adversaries just once? To really impress the audience and earn more points, Jack can string together all sorts of grisly combination fatalities. We saw the gruff antihero slam a tire around one poor sap, trapping his arms to his side before planting a signpost through the guy's cranium, then picking him up and hurling him at a wall of spikes. Hey, when dealing with bloodthirsty thugs, you can never be too careful.

We also got to hear a bit more of the game's play-by-play commentary, and many of the lines were genuinely funny (though far too vulgar to reprint here). The game really does a great job of keeping things light-hearted, preventing the subject matter from ever feeling too disturbing. Nevertheless, if it's not abundantly clear by now, this one's intended for mature audiences only.

We can't wait to see more of MadWorld, and you can rest assured that we'll continue to follow the game closely in the run-up to its March release. On a system that prides itself on challenging the status quo, this title cuts the status quo in half, throws it in a dumpster, and lights it on fire.







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# Portrait of the Artists

**VIDEO GAMES** are surely the most interactive of all media, and the invitation to participate doesn't stop with *playing* games, and Nintendo fans in particular, stay engaged in many ways, with fan art being one of the most creative and long-lived expressions of their passion. Nintendo Power has printed fan art in its pages over much of its history: the Player's Pulse column included both envelope art and other types of fan art for many years, special art contests promoted creative engagement from time to time, and our monthly Community column continues the tradition while expanding the canvas to include a multitude of artistic endeavors from cooking to tattoos. This month, we doff our berets to the countless artists who turned their gaming interests into inspired art and then shared their work with us.

**BY SCOTT PELLAND**

①

WIN A Trip to Washington, D.C.

INVENT THE ULTIMATE VIDEO GAME

HOW TO INVENT AND WIN

By Howard Phillips

COMPETE TO WIN:

AND MORE!

CONTEST RULES

INTERACTIVITY, TECHNOLOGY AND YOU

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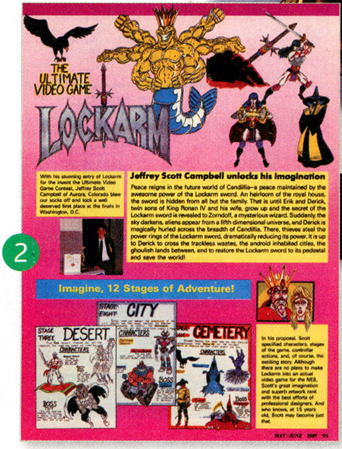
②



With his stunning entry of Lockarm for the invent the Ultimate Video Game Contest, Jeffrey Scott Campbell of Aurora, Colorado blew our socks off and took a well deserved first place at the finals in Washington, D.C.

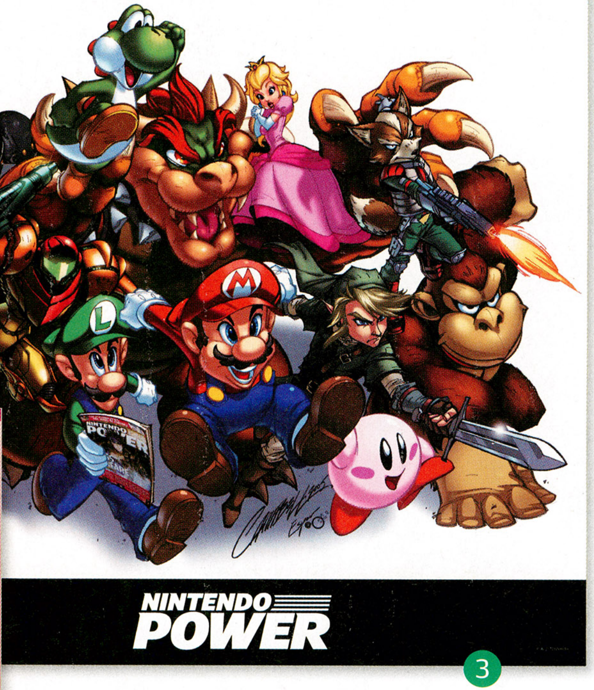
**Jeffrey Scott Campbell unlocks his imagination**

Peace reigns in the future world of Candillia—a peace maintained by the awesome power of the Lockarm sword. An heirloom of the royal house, the sword is hidden from all but the family. That is until Erik and Derick, twin sons of King Ronan IV and his wife, grow up and the secret of the Lockarm sword is revealed to Zorndolf, a mysterious wizard. Suddenly, the sky darkens, aliens appear from a fifth dimensional universe, and Derick is magically hurled across the breadth of Candillia. There, thieves steal the power rings of the Lockarm sword, dramatically reducing its power. It is up to Derick to cross the trackless wastes, the android inhabited cities, the ghoulish lands between, and to restore the Lockarm sword to its pedestal and save the world!

Imagine, 12 Stages of Adventure!

In his proposal, Scott specified characters, stages of the game, controller actions, and, of course, the exciting story. Although there are no plans to make Lockarm into an actual video game for the NES, Scott's great imagination and superb artwork rank with the best efforts of professional designers. And who knows, at 15 years old, Scott may become just that.

MAY/JUNE 1989 95

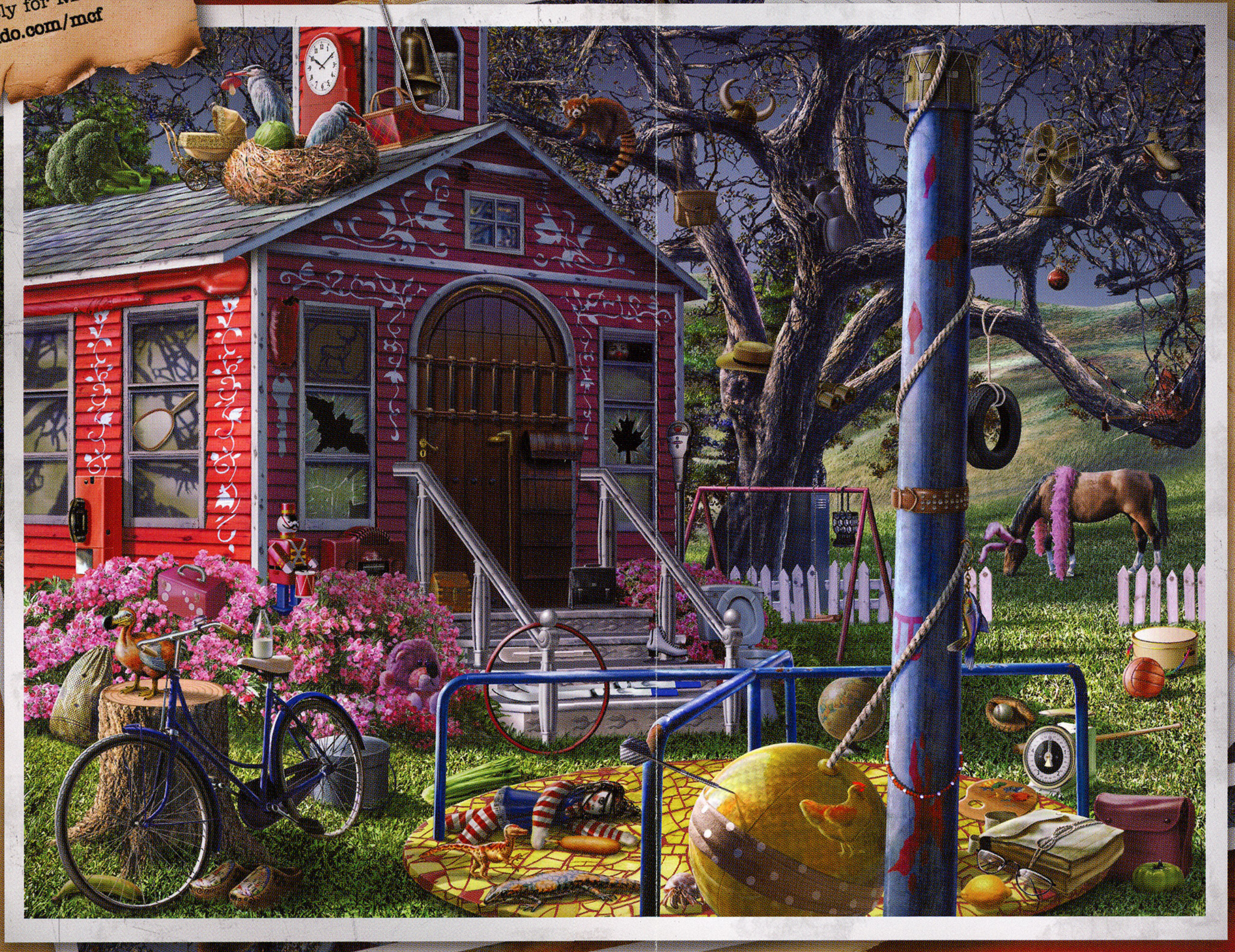


③

## THE ULTIMATE VIDEO GAME FAN ARTIST

In the November/December 1988 issue, NP's Howard Phillips invited readers to submit their ideas for the "Ultimate" video game **(1)**, describing it by virtually any means they saw fit: written, audio, visual, or tactile. Jeffrey Scott Campbell's winning entry—Lockarm—included a cornucopia of great art **(2)**. So it was no surprise that Jeffrey went on to a successful career creating comic book series such as *Gen 13* and *Danger Girl*. To celebrate NP's 200th issue, we invited Campbell to dish out a little more Nintendo fan art love, which resulted in this Nintendo character family portrait **(3)**.

See if you can spot the listed clues! If you can find these objects from the new title Mystery Case Files:™ MillionHeir,™ try the game available exclusively for Nintendo DS.™ Play the demo at **nintendo.com/mcf**

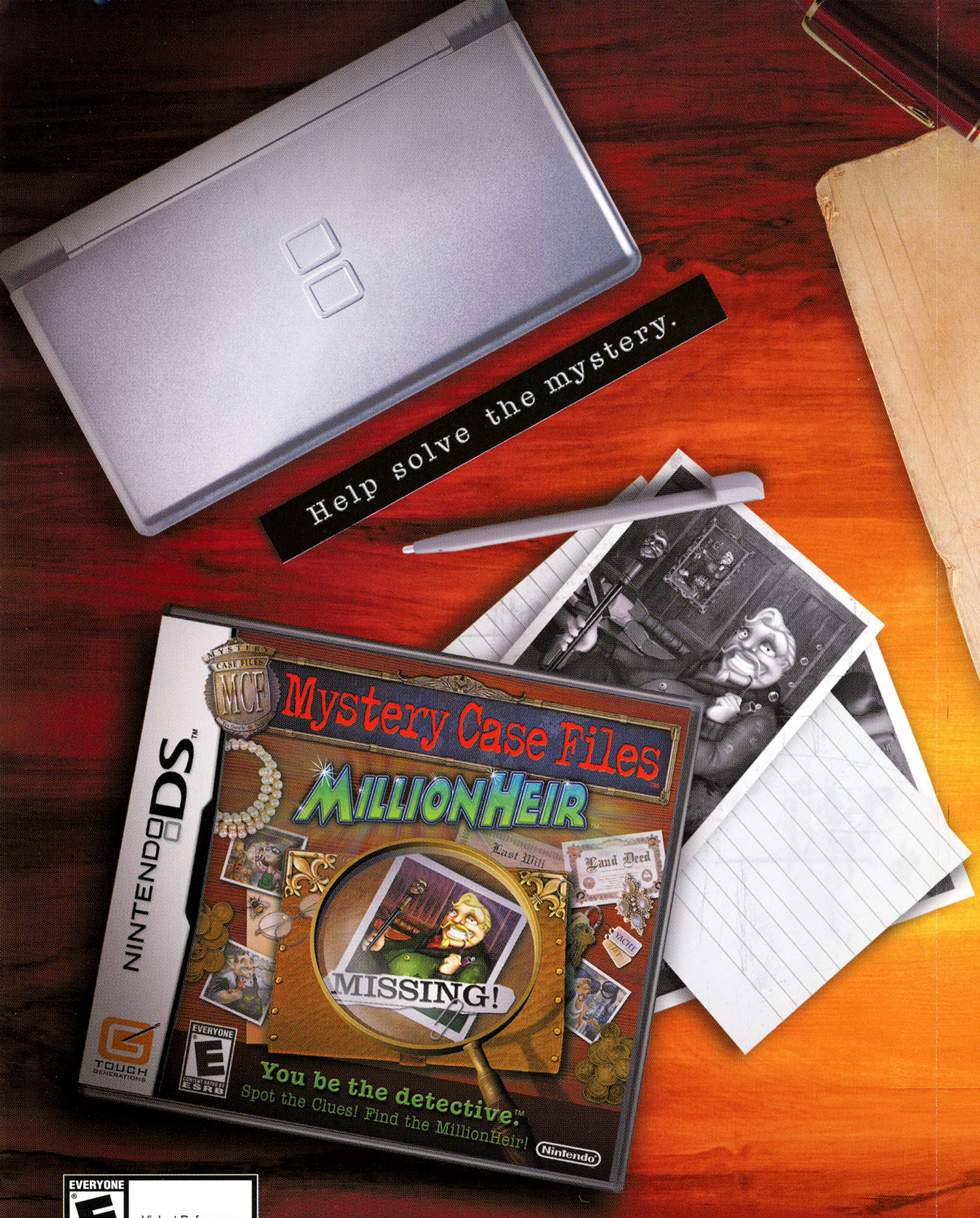


**Find these clues!**

- ☐ Dodo Bird
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Celery
- ☐ Bat
- ☐ Clock
- ☐ Scale
- ☐ Lantern
- ☐ Viking Helmet
- ☐ Lunch Box
- ☐ Dinosaur
- ☐ Tire Swing
- ☐ Ladder
- ☐ Dog Collar

Mystery Case Files
MillionHeir

NINTENDO DS™


NINTENDO DS
MCF
Mystery Case Files
MillionHeir
Last Will
Land Deed
MISSING!
YACHT
EVERYONE
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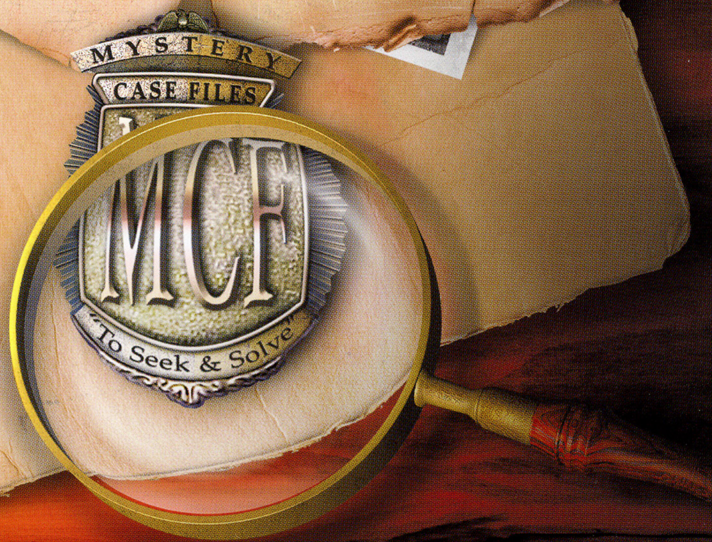
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
TOUCH GENERATIONS
You be the detective.™
Spot the Clues! Find the MillionHeir!
Nintendo

Help solve the mystery.

**Find these clues!**

- ☐ Dodo Bird
- ☐ Telephone
- ☐ Celery
- ☐ Bat
- ☐ Clock
- ☐ Scale
- ☐ Lantern
- ☐ Viking Helmet
- ☐ Lunch Box
- ☐ Dinosaur
- ☐ Tire Swing
- ☐ Ladder
- ☐ Dog Collar

Use your investigative skills to find all of the objects listed in the scene located on the back of this poster.


MYSTERY
CASE FILES
MCF
To Seek & Solve

EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Violent References

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NINTENDO DS™

# OF NINTENDO POWER

**#9 IN OUR YEARLONG CELEBRATION OF NINTENDO POWER'S CLASSIC MOMENTS**

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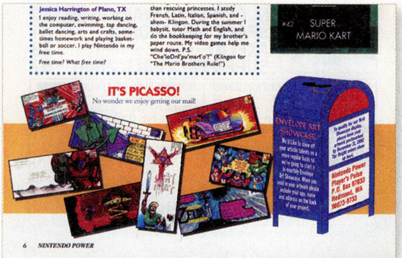
SEQUEL MADNESS

By NP's sixth issue, art was pouring into the office, and we decided to give our readers a peek. Matt Bozon's Legend of Zelda-inspired art got the ball rolling.



**Jessica Harrington of Plano, TX**

I enjoy reading, writing, working on the computer, swimming, tap dancing, ballet dancing, arts and crafts, sometimes homework and playing basketball or soccer. I play Nintendo in my free time.

*Free time? What free time?*

than rescuing princesses. I study French, Latin, Italian, Spanish, and -ahem- Klingon. During the summer I babysit, tutor Math and English, and do the bookkeeping for my brother's paper route. My video games help me wind down. P.S. "Che'loDnI'pu'marI'o'!" (Klingon for "The Mario Brothers Rule!")

#42 SUPER MARIO KART

**IT'S PICASSO!**

No wonder we enjoy getting our mail!

ENVELOPE ART SHOWCASE

We'd Like to show off your artistic talents on a more regular basis so we're going to start a bi-monthly Envelope Art Showcase. When you send in your artwork please include your age, name and address on the back of your project.

To qualify for our first Showcase display, please have your artwork postmarked by December 31, 1992. Tip: Bright colors show up best.

Nintendo Power
Player's Pulse
P.O. Box 97033
Redmond, WA
98073-9733

6 NINTENDO POWER

The official call went out in the November 1992 issue for envelope art that NP would regularly print in the magazine. We can only surmise what local postal workers thought about receiving thousands of decorated envelopes every month, but we expect it was pretty obvious to them that the colorful correspondence wasn't headed to Redmond's other high-tech giant; it's difficult to imagine Windows users expressing artistic praise in quite this manner.

next Nintendo Power!

**Christopher Bertanica**
**Skaneateles, NY**

about Halloween costumes, dogs reading, cakes that look like Game Boys and all the other really lame stuff like that.

**Dave DiRienzi**
**Baltimore, MD**

thing that says this or that sucks. You guys have your eight-year-old readers eating right out of your hands, and I hate it! I'm sure the only reason Ogre Battle rates so low in the Power Charts is because it's too complicated for your eight-year-old readers. I've played and passed

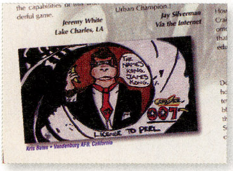
Is the Nintendo Power Source site on the World Wide Web as good as the one on America Online?

**Edward LaRusic**
**Clairmont, Alberta**

NOA/Geoff, our online honcho, says: "We've recently revamped and jazzed up our Web site. You'll want to check out the special pages for Donkey Kong Country 2: Diddy's Kong Quest, as well as pix and news on the NU 64 and lots more cool stuff. But don't take our word for it. Zip to WWW.NINTENDO.COM and make up your own mind!"

NINTENDO POWER

By early 1996, the inclusion of envelope art was so entrenched that NP dropped the Envelope Art Showcase label and selected art became more integrated into the Player's Pulse layout.



derful game.

*Jeremy White*
*Lake Charles, LA*

Urban Champion.)

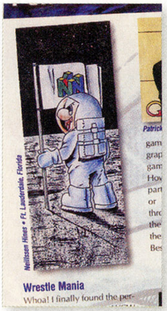
*Jay Silverman*
*Via the Internet*

THE NAME'S KONG. JAMES KONG.

LICENSE TO PEEL

Kris Bates • Vandenburg AFB, California

Many artists took aim at pop culture, spoofing films and television with a Nintendo twist.



Neilissen Hines • Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Patrick

**Wrestle Mania**

Whoa! I finally found the per-

Others had a unique perspective on history.

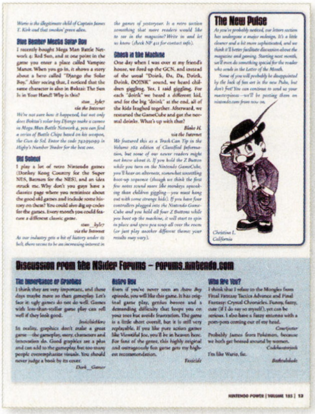
PLAYER'S PULSE

THE REAL WORLD

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Pushing the art into Player's Pulse's margins beginning with the January 2001 issue and highlighting notable submissions in the new Artist's Gallery column gave exposure to even more artists.

ARTIST'S GALLERY



*Wario is the illegitimate child of Captain James T. Kirk and that smokin' green alien.*

**Blue Bomber Meets Solar Boy**

I recently bought Mega Man Battle Network 4: Red Sun, and at one point in the game you enter a place called Vampire Manor. When you go in, it shows a story about a hero called "Django the Solar Boy." After seeing that, I noticed that the same character is also in Boktai: The Sun Is in Your Hand! Why is this?

*stan_kyle7*
*via the Internet*

*We're not sure how it happened, but not only does Boktai's solar boy Django make a cameo in Mega Man Battle Network 4, you can find a series of Battle Chips based on his weapon, the Gun de Sol. Enter the code 74293099 in Higsby's Number Trader for the best one.*

**Old School**

I play a lot of retro Nintendo games (Donkey Kong Country for the Super NES, Batman for the NES), and an idea struck me. Why don't you guys have a classics page where you reminisce about the good old games and include some history on them? You could also dig up codes for the games. Every month you could feature a different classic game.

*stan_kyle7*
*via the Internet*

*As our industry gets a bit of history under its belt, there seems to be an increasing interest in the games of yesteryear. Is a retro section something that more readers would like to see in the magazine? Write in and let us know (check NP 411 for contact info).*

**Ghost in the Machine**

One day when I was over at my friend's house, we fired up the GCN, and instead of the usual "Doink, Da, Da, Doink, Doink, DOINK" sound, we heard children giggling. Yes, I said giggling. For each "doink" we heard a different kid, and for the big "doink" at the end, all of the kids laughed together. Afterward, we restarted the GameCube and got the normal doinks. What's up with that?

*Blake H.*
*via the Internet*

*We featured this as a Trash Can Tip in the Volume 162 edition of Classified Information, but some of our newer readers might not know about it. If you hold the Z Button while you turn on the Nintendo GameCube, you'll hear an alternate, somewhat unsettling boot-up sequence (though we think the first few notes sound more like monkeys squeaking than children giggling—you must hang out with some strange kids). If you have four controllers plugged into the Nintendo GameCube and you hold all four Z Buttons while you boot up the machine, it will start to spin in place and spew pea soup all over the room (or just play another different theme; your results may vary).*

**The New Pulse**

*As you've probably noticed, our letters section has undergone a major redesign. It's a little cleaner and a bit more sophisticated, and we think it'll better facilitate discussion about the magazine and gaming. Starting next month, we'll even do something special for the reader who sends in the Letter of the Month.*

*Some of you will probably be disappointed by the lack of fan art in the new Pulse, but don't fret! You can continue to send us your masterpieces—we'll be posting them on nintendo.com from now on.*

*Christina L.*
*California*

**Discussion from the NSider Forums – forums.nintendo.com**

**The Importance of Graphics**

I think they are very important, and these days maybe more so than gameplay. Let's face it: ugly games do not do well. Games with less-than-stellar game play can sell well if they look good.

*Invisiblehero*

In reality, graphics don't make a great game—the gameplay, story, characters and innovation do. Good graphics are a plus and can add to the gameplay, but too many people overemphasize visuals. You should never judge a book by its cover.

*Dark_Gamer*

**Astro Boy**

Even if you've never seen an *Astro Boy* episode, you will like this game. It has original game play, genius bosses and a demanding difficulty that keeps you on your toes but avoids frustration. The game is a little short overall, but it is still very replayable. If you like pure action games like Viewtiful Joe, you'll be in heaven here. For fans of the genre, this highly original and outrageously fun game gets my highest recommendation.

*Toxicide*

**Who Are You?**

I think that I relate to the Moogles from Final Fantasy Tactics Advance and Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles. Funny, fuzzy, cute (if I do say so myself), yet can be serious. I also have a fuzzy antenna with a pom-pom coming out of my head.

*Courtjester*

Probably James from Pokémon, because we both get bossed around by women.

*Codehunterjosh*

I'm like Wario, fat.

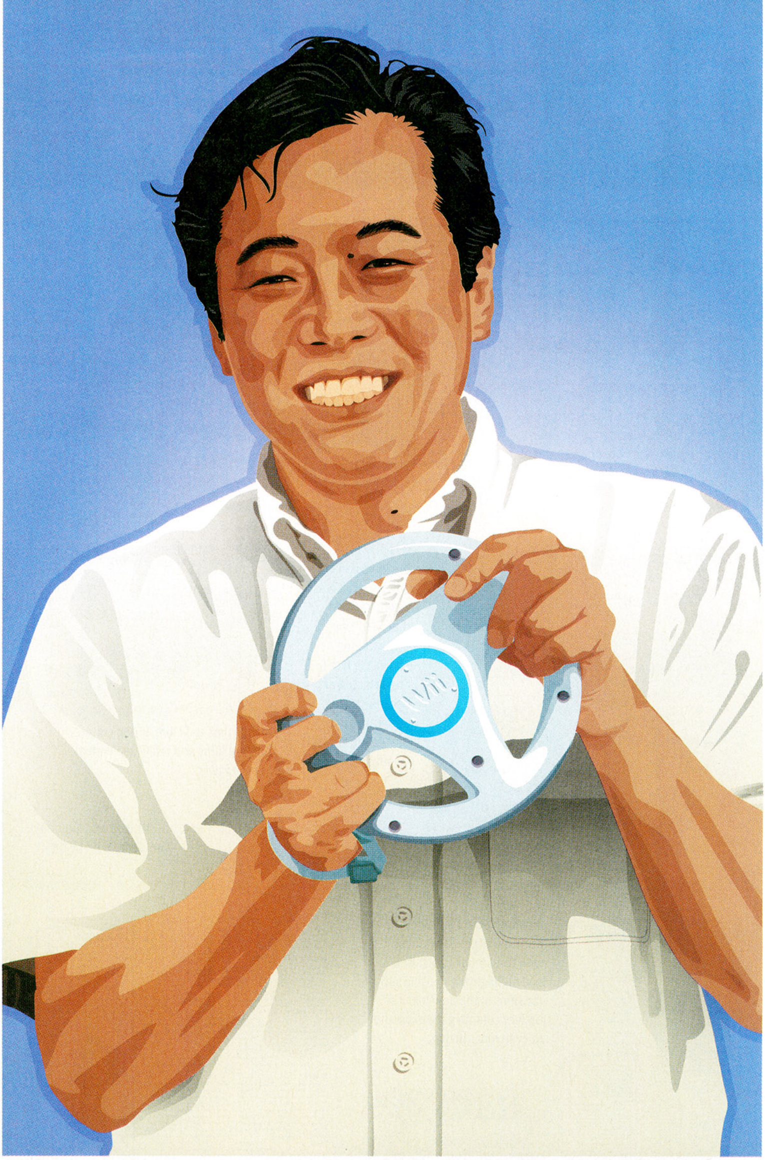
*Bathtubdude*

NINTENDO POWER | VOLUME 185 | 13

Volume 185 debuted a redesigned Player's Pulse (it became simply Pulse) to test some of the ideas we were working on for the overall redesign that was to come. Fan art was redirected to Nintendo.com, where monthly contests ran for both hand drawn and digitally-created art. Winning online submissions returned in NP's redesigned July 2005 issue and were shown each month until November 2007 (Vol. 221). Since then, various types of fan art have appeared in Community.

18

## Power Profiles



**DATE OF BIRTH**
May 13, 1965

**BIRTHPLACE**
Chiba-ken, Japan

**POSITION**
Manager, Software Development Group No. 1, Nintendo Entertainment Analysis and Development (EAD)

**BEST KNOWN FOR**
Making kart racing super

**FAVORITE FOOD**
Sushi

**CURRENT PROJECTS**
"It's a secret."

# Hideki Konno

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTINA EMPEDOCLES

Yoshi's Island, Wind Waker, Luigi's Mansion, Nintendogs, Mario Kart—few game developers have a resume as impressive as this month's Power Profiles subject. No, we're not talking about Shigeru Miyamoto, but Hideki Konno, a manager at Nintendo's famed EAD Software Development Department. Konno has been at Nintendo for over 20 years; he learned the ins and outs of game development while working on classic titles like Super Mario Bros. 3 and Super Mario World. He is perhaps best known as the driving force behind the superpopular Mario Kart series, most recently serving as producer for Mario Kart Wii. From popularizing two-player splitscreen racing with Super Mario Kart to petting pups in Nintendogs, Konno has constantly revolutionized the way we play games, a habit that we don't expect him to break anytime soon.

**NINTENDO POWER: Can you tell us how you got into the video game business?**

**HIDEKI KONNO:** I got my start when I was 16 and first became interested in personal computers. During that period, I started to play with Japanese-made PCs and Apple's Apple II. At the time, PCs had this image of "computers can do anything" and were advertised as such. But after trying them out, they gave me an impression of seeming like they can do everything, but not quite. Of course, it must have been a revolution for the business world. But I was 16 so I had no interest in business programs like spreadsheets. But when I played games on Apple II, I was shocked by how fun it was. I tried out a variety of games including adventure, simulation, and action games. After that, Nintendo released the Family Computer [also known in Japan as the Famicom, and in North America as the Nintendo Entertainment System]. It specialized in games and was relatively cheap. Plus, the games were fun. I researched it and found out that it had the 6502 as its CPU, which was the same as the Apple II. PCs cost hundreds of thousands of yen while the Family Computer cost [14,800 yen]. Being able to release that product made me think that Nintendo was an intriguing company. I started to think that work involving creating games would be enjoyable. When I went out job hunting a few years later, the first place I went to was Nintendo.

**When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?**

An astronaut. I wanted to explore the stars in a spaceship on my own. But that dream was from when I was about 10.

**You have worked on a broad range of classic Nintendo franchises. Does any one game or series hold special significance for you?**

Each title I was involved with in development holds special significance for me. Out of those, NES and SNES titles involved much strife and new discoveries so they were especially memorable. During the time of Super Mario Bros. 3 and Super Mario World, I wasn't very experienced in game development so everything was trial and error for me. Also, at around that time, game production was all about innovation. The game engines and basic library that are commonplace today weren't available to us during development back then. We also had to build the gameplay ideas within the constraints of the hardware. I have been working with [Shigeru] Miyamoto and [Takashi] Tezuka since then. I have made a lot of discoveries and been exposed to a lot of ideas working under them.

**Many of your games have prominently featured new hardware innovations. How does hardware functionality influence your approach to game development?**

We are always thinking about how to provide surprises and fun for our users. We constantly rack our brains, thinking about how to come up with fresh and innovative games. For example, when I worked on Luigi's Mansion I was thinking how fun it would be if you were able to accurately control the game using the two control sticks. With Nintendogs, we discovered the fun of being able to talk to your puppy through the mic and pet it with the touch screen. In Mario Kart Wii, we were able to implement intuitive controls using the Wii Wheel. Hardware innovation can be the

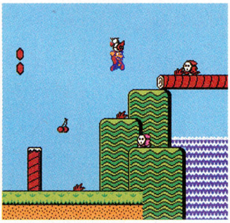
> *"Hardware innovation can be the driving force behind increased imagination in software development."*

## GAMEOGRAPHY

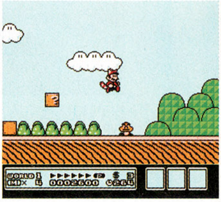
With over two decades' worth of Nintendo games under Hideki Konno's belt, it's impossible for us to include all of his hits here. Suffice it to say, there are many more classic Konno titles where these came from.

5:16
1
Nintendo

**ICE HOCKEY**
1988, NES
**DIRECTOR**



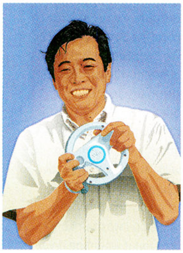
**SUPER MARIO BROS. 2**
1988, NES
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**



**SUPER MARIO BROS. 3**
1990, NES
**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

**SUPER MARIO KART**
1992, SUPER NES
**DIRECTOR**

# Power Profiles



driving force behind increased imagination in software development.

**Mario Kart DS and Mario Kart Wii have led the way for Nintendo with regards to Wi-Fi play. How important do you feel that Wi-Fi gaming is today, and how do you see it evolving in the future?**
We have been expanding the multiplayer communication aspect of the Mario Kart series so the players can better enjoy the game with their friends. Mario Kart DS and Mario Kart Wii are both compatible with Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. Using the Wi-Fi connection will allow you to play against a friend who is very far away. We had a goal of providing a safe and seamless system for the multiplayer modes so that as many people as possible can enjoy Mario Kart. I also think that it is important for many users to be able to have fun with the Wi-Fi connection. We will probably continue to expand the possibilities of gaming over Wi-Fi and it will branch off into various directions. However, it doesn't make sense unless the single player modes are also fun.

**What do you feel makes a great multiplayer experience?**
Playing with a large group can make games very exciting. The Mario Kart series puts great focus on multiplayer modes and has continued to expand on that. SNES had two players. GBA, Nintendo 64, and GCN had four. DS allowed up to eight players over the wireless connection and up to four Mario Kart fans from anywhere in the world with the Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection. We had decided that Mario Kart Wii would have up to 12 players over Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection from the beginning of the development process. We believed that if 12 players can get together from anywhere in the world, that, in itself, will make a very heated race. We had a lot to work on, such as improving the matchmaking speed and being able to join in during gameplay, but I believe the final result turned out great.

**More than ever, it seems that Nintendo is a company that thrives on exploring new ideas. How would you compare the creative environment within Nintendo today with years past?**
The production environment is constantly changing. But a change in the environment for development does not necessarily mean that it will cause a revolutionary change in ideas. Nintendo had set a huge goal of expanding the gaming population since the development of the DS and we strived for that goal by trying many different things. Our production environment did not change, but rather we reviewed and reestablished our goals. And we continued on at full speed, heading towards our goal.

**Which aspect of creating a video game do you enjoy the most?**
Developing games has numerous hardships but it is also extremely rewarding. Generally speaking, developing a game is not done by one person, but rather an entire group working together. Each of the staff members' personalities tend to get reflected in the game, and that process will go on while we continue to do trial and error each step of the way until we finish. I find it very exciting to see that while the game continues to inch towards completion.

**Are you familiar with the Mario Kart DS technique that fans refer to as "snaking"? Some players consider it a highly skilled way to race, while others view it as cheating—what is your opinion?**
We did not expect such a huge difference in skill in regards to the straightaway drifts in Mario Kart DS. Of course, considering it a technique is bad for the overall game balance because it would cause a huge rift between those who can do it and those who can't. For Mario Kart Wii, we incorporated the Wii Wheel along with the mini-turbo technique. Making games with great gameplay is a high priority for us, and we want to keep challenging many different ideas. We want to provide games with great gameplay that all users can enjoy. The feedback we receive will certainly be reflected in the next title.

**Speaking of Mario Kart, please tell us: is there**

> *"In Mario Kart Wii, you can escape [Spiny Shells] if you use the Mushroom at the right timing."*

## GAMEOGRAPHY

**SUPER MARIO WORLD 2: YOSHI'S ISLAND**
1995, SUPER NES
**DIRECTOR**

LAP 1/3
TIME 00'16"16
3rd

**MARIO KART 64**
1997, NINTENDO 64
**DIRECTOR**

**LUIGI'S MANSION**
2001, GAMECUBE
**DIRECTOR**

**THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER**
2003, GAMECUBE
**SUPERVISOR**

> *"…considering [snaking in Mario Kart DS] a technique is bad for the overall game balance because it would cause a huge rift between those who can do it and those who can't."*

**any possible way to dodge the Spiny Shell in Wii or DS versions?**
In Mario Kart DS, you're not able to dodge the Spiny Shell. In Mario Kart Wii, you can escape them if you use the Mushroom at the right timing. Please give it a try.

**Which era of video games is dearest to your heart, and why?**
It's difficult to define the best one. I have played games since Pong. Home consoles from the 8-bit Family Computer to the Wii console all have unique games that are special to that era. That is what makes it difficult to say which particular era was the best.

**When you're stumped by a particularly difficult problem while creating a game, what's your process for working through it?**
Your field of view tends to narrow while you're focusing on making a game. I think it's important to look at things from the user's perspective and think things over. But when coming across a problem, I think it's important to look at the cause, analyze it and create theories as to what's causing it and how it can be resolved. It's also crucial to analyze the cause and ask yourself why it happened. Then I ask myself what I should do. Of course, I can always use my special final move, "Ask Miyamoto."

**When creating a sequel to a popular game, how do you balance the views of the fans with your own vision?**
We always make sure to look at things from the viewpoint of a user whenever we create a game. We come up with theories like "In this situation, how would the player feel?" or "What would the player do in this scenario?" to continuously build an image of how the game should be. Miyamoto has always told us to do so. Of course, the tastes and preferences of every player out there won't be identical. But continuing to review things from the user's viewpoint will help us keep things tight with the way our users view our products and our own vision of the products.

**Do you have any personal goals within the video game industry that you have yet to achieve?**
As long as I am involved with development at Nintendo, my goal will be to continue developing products for as many people as possible in this world to enjoy. Being a continuous goal, "achieving" it will probably be very difficult.

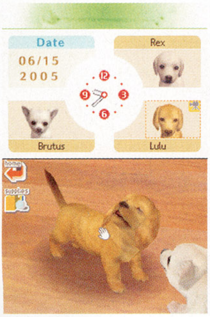
**What other games or game creators do you most admire or respect, and why?**
That would be my boss, Miyamoto. I have learned so much working under Miyamoto for over 20 years. I have worked in software development longer than I was in school; this has allowed me to learn so many things. Recently, my position as a producer has dictated that I be involved in the more product development side of things. The range of my job functions has been broadened, and I believe that I still have much to learn.

**Whose works in other forms of media, such as film or literature, do you most admire or enjoy?**
There's not one person in particular, but I do try to experience various works such as movies and books. I believe that storing the information you accumulate in your mental drawer is important. The quantity and density of what's inside those mental drawers really helps when you are putting together your ideas or coming up with new ones.

**What is your favorite hobby or pastime?**
My most recent hobby is biking. I even bike to work; road bikes are lightweight and can go quite fast so it feels really good. There are times that I bike 100km on my days off. It's a nice change of pace and it lets me relax. It gives me an opportunity to put my thoughts together. I really want to try biking in various places like America or France. Japan (Kyoto) has too many intersections and signals.

**If you weren't making games, what do you think you'd be doing?**
I really don't know. But I like to think up and create things, so I probably would have gone into some kind of development work.

**Finally, if you could have one superpower, what would it be?**
Any kind of power? It's fun to just think about it, but I'm not that interested in a super power. I want to experience a variety of things and gain overall experience. I would very much like to experience more things and lead a fun and happy life.



**NINTENDOGS**
2005, NINTENDO DS
**PRODUCER**

LAP 1/3
2nd
TIME 0:31:922

**MARIO KART DS**
2005, NINTENDO DS
**PRODUCER**

**MARIO KART Wii**
2008, Wii
**PRODUCER**

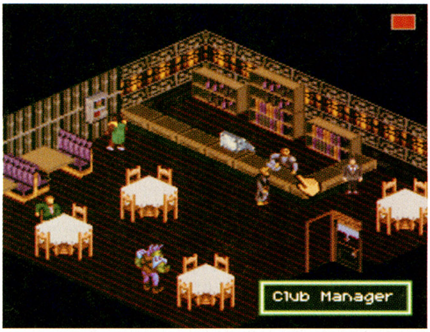
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005

# SHADOWRUN

Swords and sorcery give way to sidearms and cyberdecks in this eccentric RPG.

Nintendo
SHADOWRUN
SUPER NINTENDO

**PLATFORM:** SUPER NES
**DEVELOPER:** BEAM SOFTWARE
**PUBLISHER:** DATA EAST
**RELEASE DATE:** MAY 1993
**COVERED IN ISSUES:** 45, 48, 50, 52, 53, 56
**NUYEN TO RENT A SAMURAI:** 800

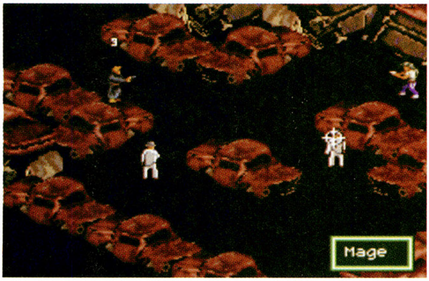


He's drinking iced tea. You could only take hardcore so far in 1993.

**Shadowrun opens** with hero Jake Armitage kicking his way out of a morgue's corpse locker, determined to find the gunmen who put him there. That would make for an unusually gritty opening even today, but in the SNES era of lighthearted fantasy, it was downright shocking. Clearly the folks at Beam Software didn't much care what everyone else was doing, as nearly every aspect of Shadowrun broke from the prevalent Dragon Quest formula. Battles are fought with guns and ranged spells on the same field map where you do your exploring, yet conversations take place in a separate window where you can select from lists of collected keywords to ask specific questions. Instead of examining objects and attacking foes by approaching them and tapping a button, you guide a floating hand or crosshair to your target and select actions from a menu. (That system was clearly inspired by a computer mouse, yet annoyingly, Shadowrun is incompatible with the actual SNES mouse.)

Much of the game's quirkiness comes from its imaginative near-future Seattle setting, which was first detailed in the Shadowrun pencil-and-paper RPG. The game features heavy cyberpunk elements, including hacking scenes in which you enter a computerized world known as the Matrix (yes, long before the movie) to disable enemy defense systems or steal money from electronic bank accounts. But the setting also has a splash of fantasy, mixing in races like elves and trolls plus an assortment of magical spells. Jake can master the game's skills himself or hire hackers and shaman to join him as AI-controlled party members.

Sure, Shadowrun looks sort of ugly, and you'll frequently get stuck when you fail to notice some tiny note or key amidst the cluttered environments. But when you're racing against time to defuse a bomb that's been surgically implanted in your brain, or raiding skyscrapers by hacking security systems and blasting orc security guards in cubicle-maze shoot-outs, you won't miss the trite save-the-world plots and tired dungeons settings of nearly every other RPG. Shadowrun was one of a kind in 1993, and amazingly it remains that way 15 years later. —CASEY L.



There's a *what* in my head?

## STILL CHASING SHADOWS

Data East wasn't the only company to take a crack at the Shadowrun franchise—Sega published an entirely different Shadowrun game for the Genesis only a few months later. With an overhead perspective, open-world structure, and a very cool first-person Matrix interface, the Genesis version was every bit as good as its SNES cousin.

Things went downhill from there, however. Japanese developer Compile made a Sega CD version in 1996, which was little more than a digital comic with RPG-style battles. Far inferior to the previous games, it was never given an international release. A planned PC title was canceled, and the series fell dormant until Microsoft revived it for a poorly received Xbox 360 shooter in 2007. The videogame rights to Shadowrun are now held by Smith & Tinker, a new company established by one of the franchise's original creators.

**HAVE A FAVORITE CLASSIC GAME YOU'D LIKE TO SEE REVISITED?**
Send us your requests—we'll consider them for a future installment of Playback. **nintendopower@futureus.com**

Dood..
*Each game sold separately.
*Prinny and Nintendo DS™ are not included.
A Witch's Tale
Magical Adventure Begins this Fall!
Rise Above the Peons!
• A Massively Strategic RPG!
DISGAEA DS
Dual title Release September 2008!
Take the Show on the Road!
• A Musical RPG with a Classic Touch.
Rhapsody
A Musical Adventure
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
May contain content inappropriate for children. Visit www.esrb.org for rating information.
Hit Maker
NINTENDO DS™
NIS America
www.NISAmerica.com
日本一
SOFTWARE
START
SELECT
Y
B

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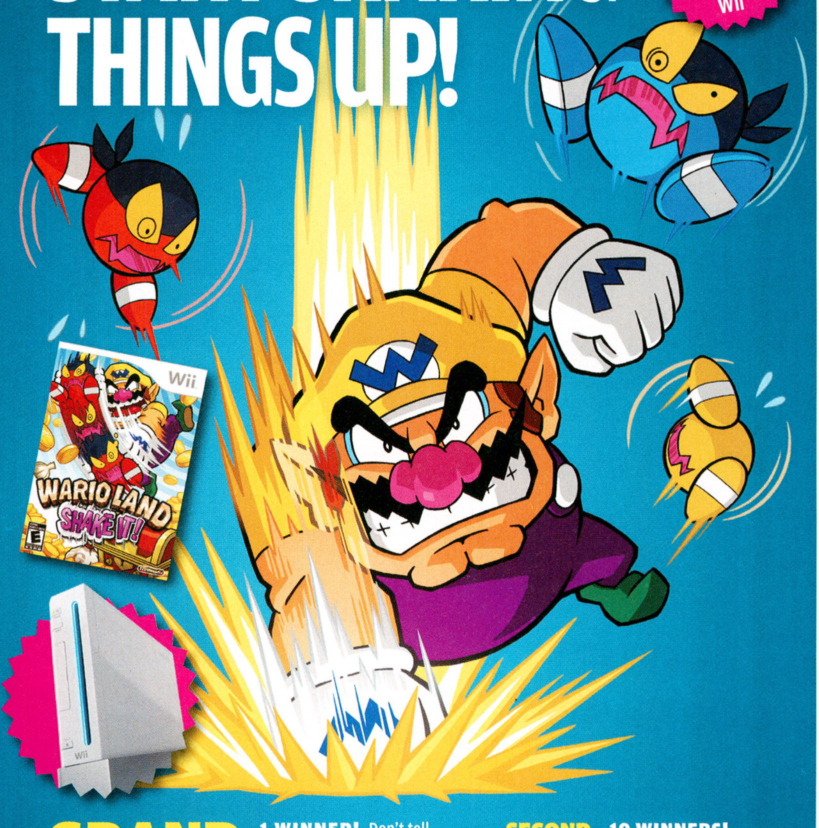
# START SHAKING THINGS UP!

**Wario Brings the Pound and the Fury To Wii**



## GRAND PRIZE

**1 WINNER!** Don't tell Wario™, but ground-pounding, butt-slamming, and robbing your enemies blind is a lot of work just to nab some booty. For our grand prize winner, a little luck and a valid entry is all that's required to win a copy of Wario Land™: Shake It! and a Wii™ console. Now that's a steal.

**TO ENTER:** Send us a postcard listing your full name, mailing address, phone number, and email address (if you have one). Address it as follows:

**Nintendo Power Sweepstakes V. 233**
**c/o Future US**
**1000 Marina Blvd., STE 510**
**Brisbane, CA 94005**

## SECOND PRIZE

**10 WINNERS!** Winning ugly is what Wario's all about, but our 10 second prize winners will be looking mighty fine when they each receive their own copy of Wario Land: Shake It! for the Wii console. Whether they're in it for the money (like Wario) or the glory of saving Queen Merelda and the Shake Dimension, this game is a brilliant nod to classic, side-scrolling platformers of old. If you feel the need for greed, enter today!

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Comic Mischief
Mild Cartoon Violence

### OFFICIAL RULES

1. **NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. A PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING**. The sponsor of this contest is Future US, Inc., 1000 Marina Blvd., STE 510 Brisbane, CA 94005 ("Sponsor").

2. ELIGIBILITY: Sweepstakes open to legal residents of the United States (excluding residents of Rhode Island and Puerto Rico). Void where prohibited by law. Entrants must be at least 13 years of age. If a winner is a minor, the prize will be awarded in the name of the winner's parent or legal guardian, who is solely responsible for all applicable federal, state and local taxes, and that winner must also provide a signed parental or guardian consent form, provided by the sponsor, within 7 days of notification attempt. Failure of the minor to return the guardian consent form will result in the forfeiture of the prize and selection of an alternate winner, who will be chosen through a random drawing from the remaining eligible entries. Employees of Sponsor and employees' household or immediate family members are NOT eligible to enter Sweepstakes.

3. TIMING: Sweepstakes begins at 12:01 a.m. PDT on August 13th, 2008 and continues until 11:59 p.m. PDT on November 1, 2008. Mailed entries must be postmarked by 11:59 p.m. PDT on November 1, 2008 to be eligible. Incomplete or late entries will not be accepted.

4. HOW TO ENTER: A contestant may enter by printing their name, address, daytime telephone number and e-mail address (if they have one) and the name of the prize drawing on a 3x5 card and mailing it to: Nintendo Power Sweepstakes V. 233, c/o Future US, 1000 Marina Blvd., STE 510 Brisbane, CA 94005. Only one entry per person will be accepted. Sponsor is not responsible for lost, late, misdirected, or incomplete entries.

5. PRIZES AND ODDS: One Grand Prize will be awarded. The Grand Prize will include one Wii™ console and one copy of the Wario Land™: Shake It! video game. The Grand Prize has a total retail value of $299.98. Ten (10) second place winners will each receive a copy of the Wario Land™: Shake It! video game, with a retail value of $49.99. Odds of winning shall be determined by the number of eligible entries received. Prizes are nontransferable and must be accepted as awarded. Winner will be responsible for all taxes (federal, state, and local) and all expenses not listed herein related to acceptance and use of any prize.

6. DRAWING: Winners will be determined by a single random drawing of all valid entries held on or about November 10, 2008. The decision of Sponsors shall be final and binding and within their sole discretion. Winners will be notified by phone or email within ten (10) days of the drawing. You may obtain the name of the winner, within six months of the drawing, by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the address above (residents of Vermont may omit return postage) . Sponsor reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to cancel or suspend this drawing should causes beyond its control corrupt the administration, security, or proper play of the drawing.

7. PRIVACY POLICY: Submissions are subject to standard privacy policy, the terms of which can be found at http://www.futureus.com/privacy.php, which terms and conditions entrants accept and agree to by submission of entries pursuant to these official rules.

8. AFFIDAVIT: The winners will be required to sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within seven days of receipt; failure to do so upon request will result in forfeiture of the prize. By acceptance of the prize, the winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Winners are responsible for paying any income taxes on the value of the prize received. Return of any prize or prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected.

9. RELEASE: Sponsor is not responsible for any damages or expenses that winners might incur as a result of this contest or the receipt of any prize. In addition, contestants release and hold Sponsor and its employees harmless from any and all damages and claims of any kind in connection with the contest. Sponsor reserves the right to confirm all winners for eligibility and compliance with the rules and regulations.

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Analysts: hard... short...

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# Come Join Us at Nintendo Power's 20th Anniversary Bash!

20th ANNIVERSARY
NINTENDO POWER
1988 – 2008

**WHEN?**
September 13th
at 8:30am

**WHERE?**
Nintendo World
in New York City's
Rockefeller Plaza

NINTENDO POWER
Super Mario 2
20-Page Spectacular
Zelda — Second Quest
Baseball Roundup
Over 50 Pro Tips
Free Poster Inside

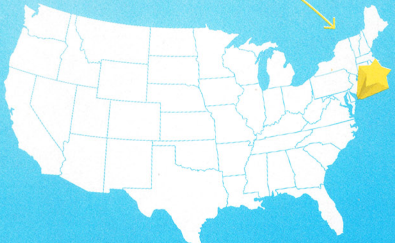
Our first issue!

July/August 1988

Put on your finest white gloves and wax your moustache, because you are invited to the Nintendo World store for a Nintendo Power party 20 years in the making!

When we open the doors at 8:30am on September 13, 2008, the first 400 people in line with any issue of Nintendo Power will cross the velvet rope into our private party. (Come dressed as a Nintendo character for a chance to win prizes!) Partygoers will play new Wii and Nintendo DS games, hang out with the Nintendo Power staff, and walk away with lots of free goodies.

The best part is that its all for a good cause. In appreciation for your support for Nintendo Power these past 20 years, gaming companies such as CDV, Gamecock, and Konami are raising awareness and funding for Starlight Children's Foundation, which helps seriously ill children and their families cope with their pain, fear and isolation through entertainment, education and family activities. Be sure to come out and how your support!



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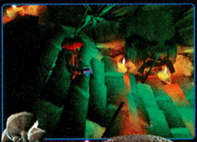
starlight children's foundation

# LOOK OUT BELOW!

## TWO MUSHROOM MEN ADVENTURES ARE UNDERFOOT THIS FALL

NINTENDO DS
MUSHROOM MEN
RISE OF THE FUNGI

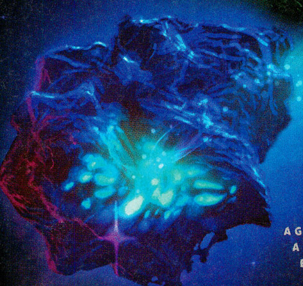


### OCTOBER

FOR NINTENDO DS™

AFTER A MYSTERIOUS COMET FALLS TO EARTH, STRANGE THINGS BEGIN TO HAPPEN IN THE UNDERGROWTH. MUSHROOMS COME TO LIFE AND TAKE SIDES- GOOD VS. EVIL. CHOOSE FROM THREE UNIQUE CLASSES AND PROTECT YOUR VILLAGE FROM THE MUSHROOMS THAT WOULD DESTROY YOUR WAY OF LIFE.

## RISE OF THE FUNGI



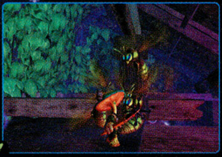
## THE SPORE WARS

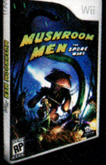
### NOVEMBER

FOR Wii™

A GREAT QUEST AMONGST ALL FOUR TRIBES BEGINS: A RACE TO UNCOVER THE TRUTH AND RESHAPE THE EVOLUTIONARY COURSE OF THE EARTH. PAX, OUR BOLETE HERO, MUST TAKE ON THIS JOURNEY BY HIMSELF. WHO WILL BE THE FIRST TO DISCOVER THE ORIGIN OF THE MUSHROOM RACE? WILL THIS KNOWLEDGE CHANGE THE COURSE OF EVOLUTION? WILL THE MUSHROOM WAR FINALLY END?

FEATURING MUSIC BY
**LES CLAYPOOL**





## MUSHROOM MEN™ IN THE SPORE WARS AND RISE OF THE FUNGI

PRODUCTS RANGE FROM RATING PENDING TO EVERYONE
RP-E
Mild Fantasy Violence
ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org
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Wii NINTENDO DS™

CREATED BY red FLY studio

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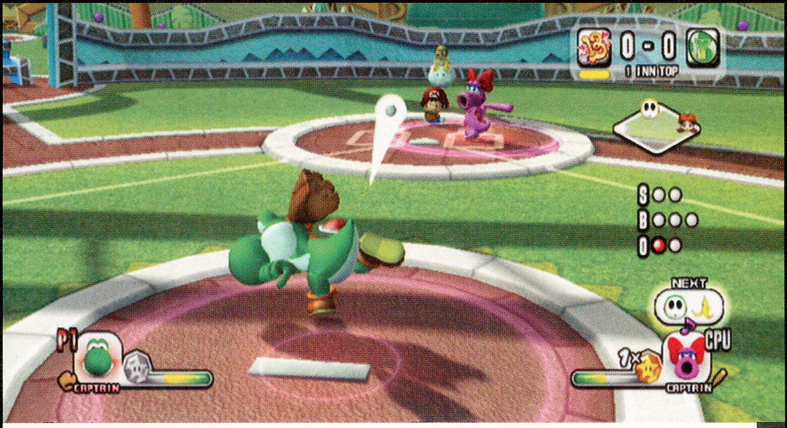
# REVIEWS

## IN-DEPTH REVIEWS OF ALL THE LATEST GAMES

We make the call on **Mario Super Sluggers**—does it bring the heat or warm the bench?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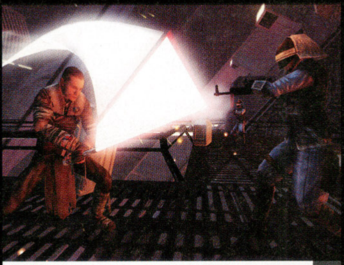

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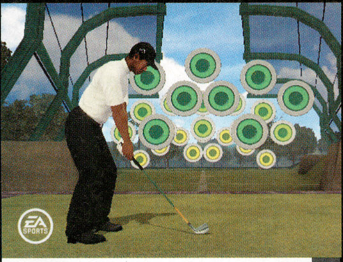

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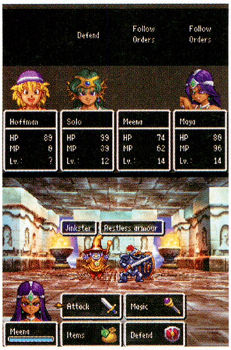
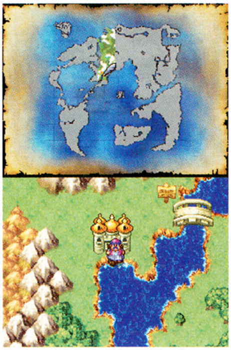
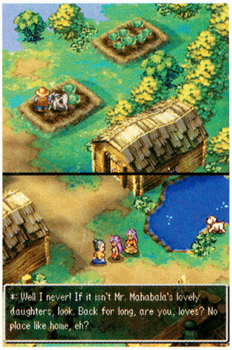
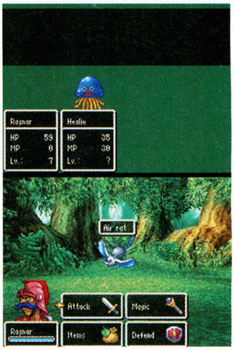






＊: Well I never! If it isn't Mr. Mahabala's lovely daughters, look. Back for long, are you, loves? No place like home, eh?



# The Quintessential Dragon Quest

## DRAGON QUEST IV: CHAPTERS OF THE CHOSEN

**RATING: 7.5**
PLATFORM: **DS**
PUBLISHER: **SQUARE ENIX**
DEVELOPER: **SQUARE ENIX/ ARTE PIAZZA**
ESRB: **EVERYONE 10+**

**Some games** are so far ahead of their time that with a complete graphical overhaul and a handful of mechanical tweaks, they can feel as modern as anything being made today. Dragon Quest IV, alas, is not one of those games. Although this DS remake offers an attractive polygonal world and plenty of usability improvements, it still feels very much like a product of its time.

Dragon Quest IV sticks so close to the standard RPG formula (which, to be fair, it helped create) that even if you haven't played it before, you'll feel like you have. The villain is a demonic figure dead-set on eradicating humanity, and the hero has been prophesied from birth to be the only one who can defeat him. At first you'll walk from town to town, then you'll sail, then you'll find a way to fly over mountains. You'll battle monsters in caves, dungeons, and castles as you search for powerful artifacts that you'll use exactly once. In combat you'll choose between Attack, Magic, Defend, and Item options. You'll usually attack. You'll never defend. You'll learn spells that raise or lower stats, and cast them only in boss fights. Any of this sounding familiar? Of course, there's a reason the standard RPG formula shows up so often: it makes for intuitive and satisfying games, and Dragon Quest IV is no exception. You may know exactly where you're going, but that doesn't take all the fun out of getting there.

The one thing that remains truly unique about Dragon Quest IV is its omnibus structure. Each member of the game's supporting cast gets a brief adventure of his own before joining up in the game's lengthy fifth chapter to support the player-created hero on a quest to save the world. It's a fun idea, giving you multiple perspectives on the story and several chances to enjoy the process of building up characters from level one. There's also a sixth chapter—exclusive to this remake—that awaits at the end of the game.

Dragon Quest IV had a few other twists that marked its place in history, but none of them remain relevant today. AI-controlled party members may have been an achievement in 1992, but they're little more than an annoyance now (fortunately, you can turn the option off for most characters). Another innovation was the ability to swap out active party members for ones waiting in your wagon, but that doesn't do much to freshen up the game's repetitive battles, because so little differentiates the eight characters in your party. (In-game descriptions aside, everyone is either a wizard, a priest, or a vanilla melee fighter.)

While the developers missed several opportunities to modernize Dragon Quest's gameplay, they put a lot of energy into updating the game's production values. The battles may not be interesting on a strategic level, but they move quickly and the hand-drawn enemies animate beautifully when they attack. Dragon Quest IV has always had a fantastic soundtrack, even by the lofty standards of the series, and the arrangements in this version are clear and rich. Additionally, the graphics have a nice clean look even when the towns and castles look disappointingly similar to each other. The extra real estate that comes from using both screens of the DS comes in handy, particularly when navigating complicated dungeons. And though the game's story is a simple one, a flavorful localization makes the text unusually fun to read.

Dragon Quest IV looks and sounds good, and its rock-solid quest offers a healthy 30-40 hours of playtime. But those looking for the cream of the RPG crop will find it elsewhere—in the spectacle of Final Fantasy IV's far more dramatic reinvention, in the unbridled creativity of The World Ends with You, and hopefully in the remakes of the more-ambitious Dragon Quest titles yet to come. **—CASEY L.**

## WRITERS' BLOCK

### HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WiiSPEAK OR Wii MOTIONPLUS BE USED?

**Justin Cheng**

A Star Wars game with Wii MotionPlus controls would be cool, but using WiiSpeak to make your voice sound like Darth Vader would make it extra awesome.

**Chris Hoffman**

Now that we've got an official Wii microphone, it's time for Phoenix Wright to come to console! And you could point in any direction with Wii MotionPlus.

**Tom Holoien**

I love WarioWare, and I can't wait to see what zany stuff they come up with for the next WarioWare using one-to-one motion and speech input.

**Casey Loe**

Wii MotionPlus has me frothing for a new Trauma Center in which you can use the remote as a one-to-one surgical instrument instead of just a pointer.

**Chris Shepperd**

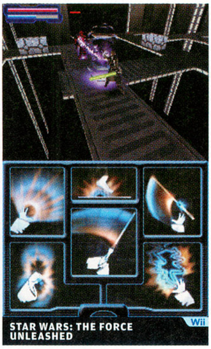
I'd like a new TMNT game where you wield staffs and katanas with Wii MotionPlus, all while ordering pizzas via WiiSpeak.

**Chris Slate**

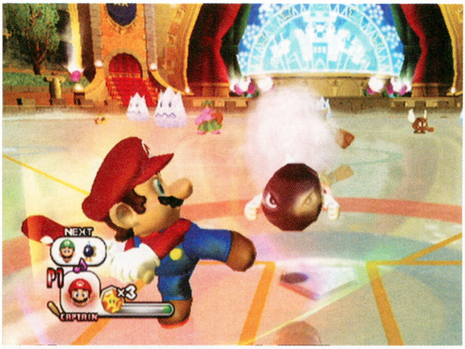
MotionPlus 1:1 swordplay in Zelda is obvious, but I'd also love to chat with folks and buy items by speaking keywords.

**Steve Thomason**

As a huge fan of obscure classical-music game Mad Maestro, I'd love to see a sequel in which you use Wii MotionPlus like a baton to conduct the orchestra.



STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED



## STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED

**RATING: 6.0**
PLATFORM: **DS**
PUBLISHER: **LUCASARTS**
DEVELOPER: **N-SPACE**
ESRB: **TEEN**

**As expected,** the DS version of The Force Unleashed is a stripped-down experience, retaining the basics but lacking the polish of the console version. In exchange, the DS game takes advantage of the handheld's strengths, using the touch screen for minigames and all combat actions. Simply tap an attack icon with your stylus, and you'll be mastering the Force in no time. Dragging the stylus from icon to icon to perform a combo is an interesting approach to combat and adds some variety, but I found myself mainly relying on slicing and dicing with the lightsaber because combos often ate away my Force meter quickly. It's unfortunate that the collision detection is spotty, though: you really have to make sure you're lined up with your target, which can be an issue due to the fact that moving your character with the Control Pad feels looser than I'd like. The DS version is certainly not the best way to experience The Force Unleashed, but the story is compelling enough to keep you playing to the end. **—JUSTIN C.**

# Plumbers in the Outfield

## MARIO SUPER SLUGGERS

**RATING: 7.5**
PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**
DEVELOPER: **NAMCO BANDAI**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

**You don't need** to know much about real baseball tactics to enjoy Mario Super Sluggers, although there is a fun strategic element to team-building. Over 40 Mario-series regulars offer unique batting, pitching, and fielding abilities for you to consider while filling your roster, and since characters that have chemistry with each other can perform special moves if positioned together, tweaking the perfect team provides an engaging challenge.

Batting and pitching are as easy as in Wii Sports (just swing the Wii remote like a bat or a pitcher's arm). When the ball is hit, however, playing defense can get crazy: you have only a second to locate your nearest fielder and recognize whether a jump, dive, or special move is needed to make a catch, all while avoiding incoming turtle shells or bombs, keeping track of base runners, and remembering the mix of button and motion controls needed to make the play. It can be overwhelming for the first couple of hours, but each individual element of the game works just fine, so practice will eventually make complex strings of actions second nature. Alternatively, you can turn on autofielding or trade motion controls for a remote-and-buttons-only option to make things more manageable.

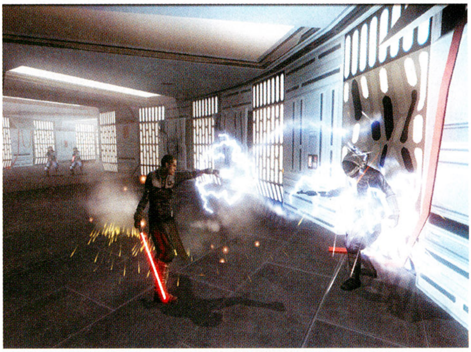
Super Sluggers is the rare Mario sports entry that puts serious effort into the single-player experience with its excellent Challenge mode, a full-on adventure game that mixes baseball with story-driven puzzles and exploration. Mario Party-type minigames fill out the package; these multiplayer time-wasters are fun enough, but won't hold anyone's attention for long.

In the end, Super Sluggers offers a solid game of hardball with a decent amount of depth. This baseball diamond loses some of its luster with occasionally confusing or clunky play (it's too easy to accidentally pitch or swing prematurely), but the game's simplified approach is great for sports-curious gamers looking to avoid the complexities of a real simulation. **—CHRIS SL.**

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 09 ALL-PLAY

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 09 ALL-PLAY

DISGAEA DS
Attacks+1
Enemy Boostx3
Bonus Gauge
0
45dm
Beatrice
LV 4
HP 23
SP 33
MV 4
JM 12
Fire 0%
Wind 50%
Ice -50%
HELP
DS



## TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 09 ALL-PLAY

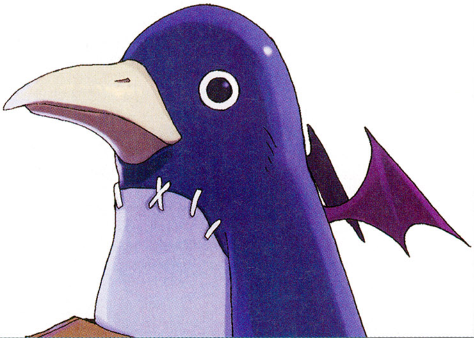
**RATING: 8.5**
PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**
DEVELOPER: **EA TIBURON**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

**EA's Tiburon studio** is on a roll. First they gave us a truly outstanding version of Madden for Wii, and now they've taken the reigns of the Tiger Woods franchise from EA Redwood Shores and delivered the console's best golf game. The one-to-one swing mechanics are phenomenal and offer lots of customization options to cater to players of all skill levels. The game's incredibly deep, as well, with an epic career mode, robust online play, and a selection of Wii-exclusive party-style minigames. Top it off with a stunning visual presentation, and you've got an effort worthy of the man for which it's named. **—STEVE T.**

## DISGAEA DS

**RATING: 7.5**
PLATFORM: **DS**
PUBLISHER: **NIS AMERICA**
DEVELOPER: **NIS**
ESRB: **TEEN**

**I struggled** with my score for Disgaea DS, and honestly, it was very hard to give it a 7.5. The game looks and plays great, and it's pretty astounding that NIS was able to get the entire game onto a DS game card. I dock it points not because the game has issues, but because I've played this game before—five years ago, in fact, and then again last year on PSP—and there just isn't enough new to the DS version to make me as excited as I should be about it. Though the original Disgaea merits an 8.5 at least, most people who want to play it already have. If you haven't played it and strategy RPGs are your thing, though, it's hard to get much better than this. **—TOM H.**



# Dark Side Rising

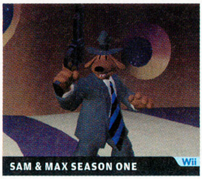
## STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED

**RATING: 7.5**
PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **LUCASARTS**
DEVELOPER: **KROME STUDIOS**
ESRB: **TEEN**

**A long time (12 years) ago** in a galaxy not so far, far away (ours), LucasArts released Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire, which came in a package complete with a video game, a novel, a soundtrack, and action figures. Now the house that the bearded one built has another such event with The Force Unleashed. So how does the game, the crux of the entire shindig, fare? When it comes to the Wii version, pretty well. As Darth Vader's secret apprentice, you're given a multitude of tools to mow down waves of enemies. You can hack and slash with your lightsaber, which isn't as satisfying as I'd hoped (it feels a bit like the waggle-heavy combat in Soulcalibur Legends). More satisfying is picking up a stormtrooper and chucking him into his buddies like a missile, throwing in some Force choking and Force lightning for good measure. It really makes you feel like a bona fide Sith Lord, and it keeps things fresh—which is helpful, considering that the game is pretty linear and repetitive overall. (Sure, you can search for hidden widgets, but you're ultimately tasked with zipping from point A to point B, wiping out everyone in between.) Further offsetting the game's flaws is the story: taking place between *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* and *Episode IV: A New Hope*, The Force Unleashed answers a lot of questions and sets up the events of *A New Hope* rather nicely. (Let's just say the secret apprentice is much more than an ancillary character, and a couple of familiar faces pop up during the adventure.) The multiplayer mode provides some good (if short-lived) entertainment—especially since the roster includes some fan-favorite "expanded universe" characters—but the story, the always-excellent *Star Wars* tunes, and the Force-powered combat are the real draws for fans.
**—JUSTIN C.**

SAM & MAX SEASON ONE
Wii

SNK ARCADE CLASSICS VOL.1
Wii



SNK ARCADE CLASSICS VOL.1
Wii

## SAM & MAX SEASON ONE

**RATING: 7.0**
PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **THE ADVENTURE COMPANY**
DEVELOPER: **TELLTALE GAMES**
ESRB: **TEEN**

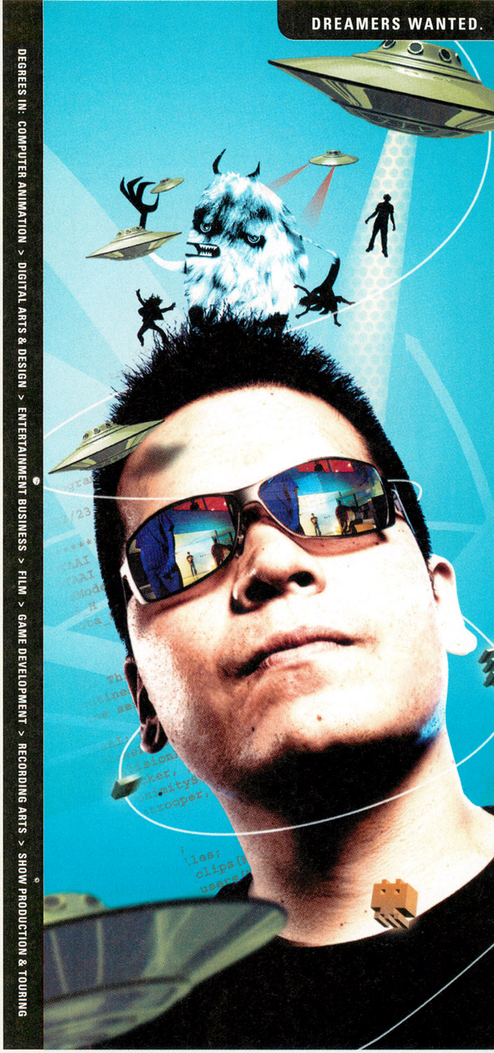
**Sam & Max** is like a video-game sitcom. Based on the madcap hijinks of a canine gumshoe and his depraved, rabbit-thing partner, the game originated as an episodic release for the PC (where the series is now in its third season). The Wii disc compiles all six episodes from season one, and while this inaugural offering suffers from its share of growing pains, it's pretty entertaining. The gameplay is old-school point-and-click adventure with an emphasis on puzzle-solving and character interaction. Some of the scenarios are quite clever—like playing through a dream to get the desired psychological analysis from a flaky therapist or taking on a mechanized Abe Lincoln during a presidential debate—and the game's cast of oddball characters is eminently likeable. Voice acting is top-notch, and the soundtrack is a lively mix of jazz and inspired thematic pieces (including an awesome up-tempo riff on the Soviet national anthem).

A sitcom is only as good as its writing, though, and in that regard Sam & Max is frustratingly uneven. There are moments of genuine hilarity, but the humor too often feels overwrought or simply falls flat. The series does seem to find its footing more and more with each episode, however, and by season's end, you'll likely grow attached to its unorthodox heroes. Besides, lots of great shows don't truly hit their stride until season two or three. **—STEVE T.**

## SNK ARCADE CLASSICS VOL. 1

**RATING: 8.5**
PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **SNK PLAYMORE**
DEVELOPER: **SNK/TERMINAL REALITY**
ESRB: **TEEN**

**Forget for a moment** that many of the games included in SNK Arcade Classics are already available on Virtual Console or in other compilations, and instead focus on what really matters: that this collection includes 16 uncensored arcade-perfect ports overflowing with old-school NeoGeo goodness. Not every game on the disc is a must-have hit, but there's a lot of fun to be had—from tried-and-true classics like Metal Slug and The King of Fighters '94 to obscure gems like Shock Troopers—and you won't have to use up your quarters (or your Wii's internal memory) to play them. Although the difficulty settings tend to lean toward too easy or too hard, the games are still highly enjoyable (especially in co-op mode), and various achievement-style challenges will keep you playing. **—CHRIS H.**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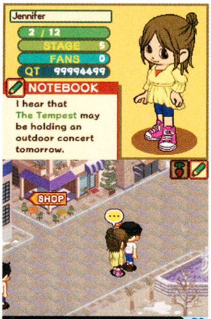
HARVEST MOON: TREE OF TRANQUILITY Wii

HARVEST MOON: TREE OF TRANQUILITY Wii



I hear that The Tempest may be holding an outdoor concert tomorrow.

POP CUTIE! STREET FASHION SIMULATION DS

FERRARI CHALLENGE TROFEO PIRELLI Wii

FERRARI CHALLENGE TROFEO PIRELLI Wii

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FERRARI CHALLENGE TROFEO PIRELLI DS

## HARVEST MOON: TREE OF TRANQUILITY

**RATING: 6.5**

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **NATSUME**
DEVELOPER: **MARVELOUS INTERACTIVE**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

**Harvest Moon** games sell themselves by sticking to formula—you're a cute little dude or dudette who comes to town to be a farmer. To that end, you plant your crops, raise your cattle, listen to villagers whine, and play a dating sim so you can spawn a cute little child who will help you out on the ranch. There's also an adventure storyline about reviving the Harvest Goddess, but the main thrust of the game is an endless grind of chores to raise healthy crops and animals to earn more cash.

Tree of Tranquility doesn't stray from the norm, despite being the series' big jump to Wii. However, motion controls have been added to make the farming feel more "realistic," and there are minigames that make you swing, flail, and flick the remote on your way to victory. These controls are twitchy at best and I'm really glad the game lets you opt out with the Classic controller.

The problem is that the game feels phoned in, from the tacked-on motion controls to the scant tutorial system that assumes you've already played every other Harvest Moon game. A couple of other issues really wreck the fun from time to time, such as the slow frame rate during thunderstorms and lousy collision detection on some of the terrain. Despite the flaws, Tree of Tranquility is still the addictive farming sim Harvest Moon fans expect, if not necessarily the "heartwarming" life sim Natsume promised us. If nothing else, it'll definitely keep us busy until Animal Crossing comes out. **—AMANDA G.**

## POP CUTIE! STREET FASHION SIMULATION

**RATING: 6.0**

PLATFORM: **DS**
PUBLISHER: **KOEI**
DEVELOPER: **KOEI**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

**On the surface,** Pop Cutie! has the appearance of sheer fluff: you get ideas for clothes from people on the street, then design and sell them to those same people. On closer inspection, though, Pop Cutie! shows intriguing depth, providing subtle lessons in economics such as supply and demand and staff management, educating the player without being patronizing. The game's strategy is in determining what kinds of clothes to sell and how many employees to hire, and watching what the competition is doing. The downside of Pop Cutie! is that all of these duties are hard to accomplish due to an unbearably clunky interface that makes simple tasks difficult. There's a lesson to be learned from the game, but it's one for Koei, not one for up-and-coming fashionistas. **—CHRIS SH.**

## FERRARI CHALLENGE TROFEO PIRELLI

**RATING: 7.5**

PLATFORM: **Wii**
PUBLISHER: **SYSTEM 3**
DEVELOPER: **EUTECHNYX**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

**Fans of hardcore** racing simulations finally have a Wii title they can sink their teeth into. Ferrari Challenge offers an authentic recreation of the titular race series, complete with ultrarealistic handling (via either analog or motion controls) and comprehensive options for both tuning your car's performance and customizing its appearance. The game looks pretty good, to boot, and though limited to a single automaker, it exploits that illustrious brand to the fullest. In fact, this feels like an interactive love letter to the "prancing horse;" the moment the title screen appears with an almost-sensual close-up of a Ferrari accompanied by sweeping choral music, you can tell the developers were passionate about their subject matter. There are a few bumps in the road—the difficulty seems uneven at times and changing your car's livery is strangely laborious—but if it's a serious racer you seek, this is the best ride in town. **—STEVE T.**

## FERRARI CHALLENGE TROFEO PIRELLI

**RATING: 6.0**

PLATFORM: **DS**
PUBLISHER: **SYSTEM 3**
DEVELOPER: **CLIMAX STUDIOS**
ESRB: **EVERYONE**

**Ferrari vehicles** have frequently been absent from other racing titles, ostensibly so they can be highlighted with their own game, such as Ferrari Challenge. The decision to go it alone was a mistake, at least for the DS version. The meager number of tracks and vehicles makes Ferrari Challenge dreadfully short, as the developers chose to maintain Ferrari brand identity in lieu of creating a solid game. Ferrari Challenge looks and plays nice while it lasts, however, with sleek-looking cars and faithfully recreated tracks (although the engine noise sounds more like a hornet's nest than like the sweet purr of a Ferrari V12). As a little diversion, you can play a modified game of war with trading cards featuring various Ferrari models, but this lone minigame can't save Ferrari Challenge from being too brief. **—CHRIS SH.**

## ALSO THIS MONTH

We didn't get 'em in time to review 'em, but keep your eyes open for Namco Bandai's **We Cheer** for Wii, THQ's **Viva Piñata: Pocket Paradise** for DS, and Electronic Arts's **Spore Creatures** for DS.

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# [REVIEWS ARCHIVE]

## Football Fever

While there was a good mix of games reviewed last month, the one major standout was Madden NFL 09 All-Play on Wii (9.0). With its improved graphics and great new Call Your Shots feature, this year's Madden is pretty darn awesome. Other high-scoring titles include Bangai-O Spirits, New International Track and Field, and Guitar Hero: On Tour. All three DS games earned an 8.0.

**SCORES REFLECT INDIVIDUAL REVIEWERS' OPINIONS.**
**• INDICATES WI-FI COMPATIBLE**

| Wii | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TITLE | SCORE | PUBLISHER | VOL. | ESRB |
| Alone in the Dark | 4.0 | Atari | 232 | M |
| Alvin and the Chipmunks | N/A | Brash | 224 | E |
| Backyard Baseball '09 | N/A | Atari | 231 | E |
| Baroque | 3.0 | Atlus | 227 | T |
| • Battalion Wars 2 | 7.5 | Nintendo | 222 | T |
| Battle of the Bands | 7.0 | THQ | 228 | T |
| Ben 10: Protector of Earth | N/A | D3PA | 223 | E10+ |
| Blast Works: Build, Trade, Destroy | 8.5 | Majesco | 229 | E |
| Bleach: Shattered Blade | N/A | Sega | 222 | T |
| Bomberman Land | 5.0 | Hudson | 226 | E |
| Boom Blox | 8.0 | Electronic Arts | 229 | E |
| Bully: Scholarship Edition | 8.5 | Rockstar | 227 | T |
| Castle of Shikigami III | 7.0 | Aksys | 228 | T |
| The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian | N/A | Disney Interactive | 229 | T |
| Code Lyoko: Quest for Infinity | N/A | The Game Factory | 223 | E10+ |
| Cranium Kabookii | N/A | Ubisoft | 224 | E |
| Cruis'n | N/A | Midway | 224 | E |
| CSI: Hard Evidence | N/A | Ubisoft | 225 | M |
| Death Jr.: Root of Evil | 7.0 | Eidos | 230 | T |
| Deca Sports | N/A | Hudson | 229 | E |
| Destroy All Humans! Big Willy Unleashed | 7.0 | THQ | 227 | T |
| Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 3 | N/A | Atari | 223 | T |
| Dragon Quest Swords: The Masked Queen and the Tower of Mirrors | 7.0 | Square Enix | 226 | T |
| Dream Pinball 3D | N/A | Southpeak | 228 | E10+ |
| Emergency Heroes | N/A | Ubisoft | 230 | E10+ |
| Emergency Mayhem | N/A | Codemasters | 228 | T |
| • Endless Ocean | 7.5 | Nintendo | 225 | E |
| • FIFA 08 | N/A | Electronic Arts | 222 | E |
| Final Fantasy Fables: Chocobo's Dungeon | 7.5 | Square Enix | 231 | E10+ |
| Fire Emblem: Radiant Dawn | 9.5 | Nintendo | 222 | E10+ |
| Furu Furu Park | N/A | Majesco | 225 | T |
| Game Party | N/A | Midway | 224 | E |
| • Geometry Wars: Galaxies | 8.0 | Sierra | 222 | E |
| • Ghost Squad | 7.0 | Sega | 223 | T |
| Godzilla Unleashed | 5.5 | Atari | 223 | E10+ |
| The Golden Compass | 4.0 | Sega | 224 | E10+ |
| Guilty Gear XX Accent Core | 8.0 | Aksys Games | 222 | T |
| • Guitar Hero: Aerosmith | 7.0 | RedOctane | 232 | T |
| • Guitar Hero III: Legends of Rock | 9.0 | Activision | 222 | T |
| Harvey Birdman: Attorney at Law | 6.5 | Capcom | 224 | T |
| High School Musical: Sing It! | N/A | Disney Interactive | 223 | E |
| The House of the Dead 2 & 3 Return | 7.0 | Sega | 227 | M |
| The Incredible Hulk | 3.5 | Sega | 231 | T |
| Indoor Sports | N/A | Konami | 223 | E |
| Indy 500 Legends | N/A | Destineer | 223 | E |
| Iron Man | 5.5 | Sega | 229 | T |
| Jenga | N/A | Atari | 223 | E |
| Jumper | N/A | Brash | 226 | T |
| Karaoke Revolution Presents American Idol Encore | N/A | Konami | 226 | E |
| Kawasaki Quad Bikes | N/A | Destineer | 223 | E |
| Kidz Sports: Basketball | N/A | Destineer | 224 | E |
| Kidz Sports: Ice Hockey | N/A | Destineer | 225 | E |
| Kung Fu Panda | N/A | Activision | 230 | E10+ |
| LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures | 7.5 | LucasArts | 230 | E10+ |
| LEGO Star Wars: The Complete Saga | N/A | LucasArts | 222 | E |
| Link's Crossbow Training | 6.5 | Nintendo | 223 | T |
| Little League World Series Baseball 2008 | N/A | Activision | 232 | E |
| • Madden NFL 09 All-Play | 9.0 | Electronic Arts | 232 | E |
| Manhunt 2 | 7.5 | Rockstar Games | 223 | M |
| • Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Games | 7.5 | Sega | 223 | E |
| • Mario Kart Wii | 9.0 | Nintendo | 228 | E |
| • Medal of Honor Heroes 2 | 8.0 | Electronic Arts | 223 | T |
| MiniCopter: Adventure Flight | 6.5 | Aksys | 228 | E |
| MLB 2K8 | 6.5 | 2K Sports | 227 | E |
| MLB Power Pros | 6.5 | 2K Sports | 222 | E |
| MLB Power Pros 2008 | 7.0 | 2K Sports | 232 | E |
| • MX vs. ATV Untamed | 6.0 | THQ | 224 | E |
| My Horse and Me | N/A | Atari | 225 | E |
| My Word Coach | N/A | Ubisoft | 223 | E |
| Namco Museum Remix | N/A | Namco Bandai | 222 | E |
| Naruto: Clash of Ninja Revolution | 7.0 | Tomy/D3PA | 222 | T |
| NCAA Football 09 All-Play | 5.0 | Electronic Arts | 232 | E |
| Need For Speed ProStreet | 8.0 | Electronic Arts | 223 | E10+ |
| Nicktoons: Attack of the Toybots | N/A | THQ | 223 | E |
| • NiGHTS: Journey of Dreams | 9.0 | Sega | 224 | E |
| Ninja Reflex | N/A | Electronic Arts | 227 | E10+ |
| • Nitro Bike | 3.5 | Ubisoft | 225 | E10+ |
| No More Heroes | 8.0 | Ubisoft | 226 | M |
| Obscure: The Aftermath | 7.0 | Ignition | 227 | M |
| Octomania | N/A | Conspiracy | 227 | E |
| Okami | 7.5 | Capcom | 228 | T |
| One Piece: Unlimited Adventure | 6.5 | Namco Bandai | 225 | T |
| Opoona | 7.0 | Koei | 227 | E10+ |
| Order Up! | 7.0 | Zoo Games | 232 | E |
| Pinball Hall of Fame: The Williams Collection | 7.5 | Crave | 227 | E10+ |
| • Pro Evolution Soccer 2008 | N/A | Konami | 227 | E |
| Puzzle Quest: Challenge of the Warlords | N/A | D3PA | 224 | E10+ |
| • Rayman Raving Rabbids 2 | 6.5 | Ubisoft | 223 | E10+ |
| Resident Evil: The Umbrella Chronicles | 8.0 | Capcom | 223 | M |
| Rock Band | 8.0 | MTV Games | 231 | T |
| Rock Band Track Pack Volume 1 | 6.5 | MTV Games | 232 | T |
| Rockstar Games Presents Table Tennis | N/A | Rockstar | 222 | E |
| Samurai Warriors: Katana | 7.5 | Koei | 224 | T |
| Sega Bass Fishing | 5.0 | Sega | 227 | E |
| Sega Superstars Tennis | 8.0 | Sega | 227 | E10+ |
| Showtime Championship Boxing | N/A | Jack of All Games | 224 | E10+ |
| The Simpsons Game | 4.0 | Electronic Arts | 223 | T |
| Smarty Pants | N/A | Electronic Arts | 223 | E |
| • Sonic Riders: Zero Gravity | 7.0 | Sega | 225 | E |
| Soulcalibur Legends | 6.5 | Namco Bandai | 223 | T |
| Space Chimps | N/A | Brash | 231 | E10+ |
| Speed Racer | N/A | Warner Bros. Interactive | 229 | E |
| Summer Sports: Paradise Island | 3.5 | Destineer | 228 | E |
| Super Mario Galaxy | 9.5 | Nintendo | 223 | E |
| • Super Smash Bros. Brawl | 10 | Nintendo | 226 | T |
| Super Swing Golf Season 2 | 6.5 | Tecmo | 224 | E10+ |
| Target: Terror | N/A | Konami | 227 | M |
| Thrillville: Off the Rails | N/A | LucasArts | 222 | E |
| Tomb Raider Anniversary | 6.5 | Eidos | 223 | T |
| Top Spin 3 | 7.0 | 2K Sports | 229 | E |
| Trauma Center: New Blood | 8.0 | Atlus | 223 | T |
| Victorious Boxers: Revolution | N/A | XSEED | 222 | T |
| WALL*E | N/A | THQ | 231 | E |
| • We Love Golf! | 8.5 | Capcom | 231 | E10+ |
| We Ski | 6.0 | Namco Bandai | 229 | E |
| Wild Earth: African Safari | N/A | Majesco | 228 | E |
| Worms: A Space Oddity | 6.0 | THQ | 227 | E10+ |
| WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2008 | 6.5 | THQ | 222 | T |
| WWII Aces | 3.0 | Destineer | 226 | T |

## REVIEWER NOTES

5
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### CAKE MANIA 2

I recently played the original Cake Mania again, and I was blown away by how archaic it feels next to its successor. The controls in Cake Mania 2 are so much more responsive it feels like a different game. I still stand by my criticisms of Cake Mania 2 (there's not much variety), but it delivers on its promise of fun, simple, arcade-style baking action. **—CHRIS H.**

### TRAUMA CENTER: UNDER THE KNIFE 2

***Under the Knife 2 isn't very different from the original, but I personally don't mind. When a series works as well as this one does, you don't want to mess with the formula too much.***

**—JUSTIN C.**

### MADDEN NFL 09 ALL-PLAY

With EA Sports promising to put more effort into its Wii titles this year, the company's gridiron offerings are a mixed bag. While NCAA Football falls squarely in mediocre territory, Madden NFL 09 is pigskin heaven. The game looks great, the controls are rock-solid, and the all-new Call Your Shots option is the best thing to happen to football since Adrian Peterson. **—STEVE T.**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Zack & Wiki: Quest for Barbaros' Treasure | 9.0 | Capcom | 222 | E |
| **NINTENDO DS** | | | | |
| • Advance Wars: Days of Ruin | 8.5 | Nintendo | 225 | E10+ |
| Alvin and the Chipmunks | N/A | Brash | 223 | E |
| American Girl: Julie Finds a Way | N/A | THQ | 224 | E |
| Apollo Justice: Ace Attorney | 8.0 | Capcom | 226 | T |
| Are you Smarter Than a 5th Grader? | N/A | THQ | 223 | E |
| Arkanoid DS | 6.5 | Square Enix | 230 | E |
| Assassin's Creed: Altair's Chronicles | 7.5 | Ubisoft | 226 | T |
| Balls of Fury | N/A | Destination Software | 222 | E10+ |
| Bangai-O Spirits | 8.0 | D3PA | 232 | E10+ |
| • Bleach: The Blade of Fate | 8.5 | Sega | 222 | T |
| • Bomberman Land Touch! 2 | 6.0 | Hudson | 225 | E |
| Boogie | 7.0 | Electronic Arts | 224 | E10+ |
| Brain Challenge | N/A | Ubisoft | 225 | E |
| Brain Voyage | N/A | Eidos | 228 | E |
| Bratz: Super Babyz | N/A | THQ | 226 | E |
| Build-A-Bear Workshop | N/A | The Game Factory | 223 | E |
| Cake Mania 2 | 6.5 | Majesco | 230 | E |
| Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare | N/A | Activision | 223 | T |
| Carnival Games | 4.5 | 2K Games | 231 | E |
| The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian | N/A | Disney Interactive | 229 | E10+ |
| Civilization Revolution | 7.5 | 2K Games | 231 | E10+ |
| Code Lyoko: Fall of Xana | N/A | The Game Factory | 230 | E |
| Commando: Steel Disaster | N/A | XS Games | 229 | E10+ |
| Contra 4 | 8.5 | Konami | 222 | T |
| Corvette Evolution GT | N/A | Jack of All Games | 223 | E |
| Cooking Mama 2: Dinner with Friends | 7.0 | Majesco | 223 | E |
| Crosswords DS | N/A | Nintendo | 228 | E |
| Dementium: The Ward | 8.5 | Gamecock | 223 | M |
| Draglade | 7.5 | Atlus | 224 | E10+ |
| Dragon Quest Monsters: Joker | 8.0 | Square Enix | 222 | E10+ |
| Dream Pinball 3D | N/A | Southpeak | 228 | E10+ |
| Drone Tactics | 7.0 | Atlus | 229 | E10+ |
| Dungeon Explorer: Warriors of Ancient Arts | 6.5 | Hudson | 226 | T |
| Etrian Odyssey II: Heroes of Lagaard | 8.5 | Atlus | 230 | E10+ |
| • Final Fantasy Crystal Chronicles: Ring of Fates | 7.0 | Square Enix | 226 | E10+ |
| Final Fantasy IV | 9.0 | Square Enix | 231 | E10+ |
| Final Fantasy Tactics A2: Grimoire of the Rift | 7.0 | Square Enix | 230 | E10+ |
| Final Fantasy XII: Revenant Wings | 7.5 | Square Enix | 223 | E10+ |
| Front Mission | 6.5 | Square Enix | 222 | E10+ |
| Garfield Gets Real | N/A | Destination | 223 | E |
| • Geometry Wars: Galaxies | N/A | Sierra | 222 | E |
| Godzilla Unleashed: Double Smash | 3.0 | Atari | 224 | E |
| The Golden Compass | N/A | Sega | 223 | E10+ |
| • GRID | 8.5 | Codemasters | 230 | E |
| Guitar Hero: On Tour | 8.0 | RedOctane | 232 | E10+ |
| Hannah Montana: Music Jam | N/A | Disney Interactive | 223 | E |
| Harvest Moon DS Cute | 7.5 | Natsume | 226 | E |
| Harvest Moon: Island of Happiness | 7.0 | Natsume | 231 | E |
| Homie Rollerz | N/A | Destineer | 226 | E |
| Impossible Mission | N/A | Codemasters | 223 | E |
| The Incredible Hulk | 7.5 | Sega | 231 | E10+ |
| Indy 500 Legends | N/A | Destineer | 224 | E |
| Insecticide | 6.5 | Gamecock | 226 | E10+ |
| Iron Man | 5.0 | Sega | 229 | E10+ |
| Izuna 2: The Unemployed Ninja Returns | 5.0 | Atlus | 232 | T |
| Jackass: The Game | N/A | Red Mile Entertainment | 225 | T |
| Jake Hunter: Detective Chronicles | 5.0 | Aksys | 229 | T |
| Kung Fu Panda | N/A | Activision | 230 | E10+ |
| Left Brain, Right Brain | N/A | Majesco | 224 | E |
| LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures | 7.5 | LucasArts | 230 | E |
| LEGO Star Wars: The Complete Saga | N/A | LucasArts | 222 | E |
| LifeSigns: Surgical Unit | N/A | Dreamcatcher | 223 | T |
| Line Rider 2: Unbound | N/A | Genius Products | 232 | E |
| Little League World Series Baseball 2008 | N/A | Activision | 232 | E |
| Looney Tunes: Cartoon Conductor | 6.5 | Eidos | 230 | E |
| Lost in Blue 3 | 5.5 | Konami | 227 | E10+ |
| Madden NFL 09 | N/A | Electronic Arts | 232 | E |
| • Mario & Sonic at the Olympic Games | 7.5 | Sega | 225 | E |
| Mario Party DS | 8.0 | Nintendo | 223 | E |
| Master of Illusion | N/A | Nintendo | 223 | E |
| • Mega Man Star Force 2 | 7.0 | Capcom | 230 | E |
| Mega Man ZX Advent | 8.5 | Capcom | 222 | E10+ |
| Miami Nights: Singles in the City | N/A | Ubisoft | 225 | T |
| Mister Slime | 6.0 | Southpeak | 230 | E |
| MLB 2K8 Fantasy All-Stars | 6.5 | 2K Sports | 228 | E |
| Monster Jam | N/A | Activision | 223 | E |
| The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor | N/A | Vivendi Games | 231 | T |
| MX vs. ATV Untamed | 6.0 | THQ | 224 | E |
| My Horse and Me | N/A | Atari | 225 | E |
| MySims | N/A | Electronic Arts | 222 | E |
| Myst | 5.0 | Empire Interactive | 227 | E |
| Mystery Dungeon: Shiren the Wanderer | 6.5 | Sega | 226 | E |
| • N+ | 7.0 | Atari | 228 | E |
| Nancy Drew: The Mystery of the Clue Bender Society | N/A | Majesco | 232 | E10+ |
| • Nanostray 2 | 6.0 | Majesco | 225 | E |
| Naruto: Ninja Destiny | 7.0 | Tomy/D3PA | 226 | T |
| Naruto: Path of the Ninja | 7.0 | Tomy/D3PA | 222 | E10+ |
| • Need For Speed ProStreet | N/A | Electronic Arts | 223 | E |
| • New International Track and Field | 8.0 | Konami | 232 | E10+ |
| Ninja Gaiden: Dragon Sword | 8.5 | Tecmo | 227 | T |
| Ninja Reflex | N/A | Electronic Arts | 227 | E10+ |
| Ontamarama | 7.0 | Atlus | 223 | E |
| Orcs & Elves | 5.0 | Electronic Arts | 223 | T |
| Panzer Tactics DS | N/A | Conspiracy | 223 | E10+ |
| Petz: Bunnyz | N/A | Ubisoft | 227 | E |
| Petz Wild Animals: Tigerz | N/A | Ubisoft | 227 | E |
| Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney Trials and Tribulations | 8.5 | Capcom | 222 | T |
| • Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Explorers of Darkness | 7.5 | Nintendo | 229 | E |
| • Pokémon Mystery Dungeon: Exlporers of Time | 7.5 | Nintendo | 229 | E |
| • Pro Evolution Soccer 2008 | N/A | Konami | 227 | E |
| • Professor Layton and the Curious Village | 8.5 | Nintendo | 225 | E |
| Puchi Puchi Virus | 7.0 | NIS America | 228 | E |
| Puppy Palace | N/A | Ubisoft | 225 | E |
| Puzzle de Harvest Moon | N/A | Natsume | 223 | E |
| Rayman Raving Rabbids 2 | N/A | Ubisoft | 223 | E10+ |
| • River King: Mystic Valley | 7.0 | Natsume | 225 | E |
| Rondo of Swords | 6.5 | Atlus | 228 | E10+ |
| Sega Superstars Tennis | 8.0 | Sega | 227 | E |
| The Simpsons Game | N/A | Electronic Arts | 223 | T |
| Soul Bubbles | 6.5 | Eidos | 230 | E |
| Space Chimps | N/A | Brash | 231 | E |
| Space Invaders Extreme | 8.0 | Square Enix | 230 | E |
| Speed Racer | N/A | Warner Bros. Interactive | 229 | E |
| Strawberry Shortcake: 4 Seasons Cake | N/A | Jack of All Games | 224 | E |
| Summon Night: Twin Age | 7.5 | Atlus | 229 | E10+ |
| Super Dodgeball Brawlers | 6.5 | Aksys | 229 | E |
| Tamagotchi Connection: Corner Shop 3 | N/A | Namco Bandai | 230 | E |
| Teenage Zombies: Invasion of the Alien Brain Thingys | 7.0 | Ignition | 228 | E10+ |
| Thrillville: Off the Rails | N/A | LucasArts | 222 | E |
| Top Spin 3 | 6.0 | 2K Sports | 229 | E |
| Trauma Center: Under the Knife 2 | 8.5 | Atlus | 231 | T |
| Ultimate Mortal Kombat | N/A | Midway | 223 | M |
| WALL*E | N/A | THQ | 231 | E |
| • Warhammer 40,000: Squad Command | 8.0 | THQ | 224 | T |
| Wordjong | N/A | Destineer | 224 | E |
| • The World Ends With You | 9.0 | Square Enix | 228 | T |
| WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2008 | N/A | THQ | 222 | T |
| • Yu-Gi-Oh! World Championship Tournament 2008 | N/A | Konami | 224 | E |
| Zoo Tycoon 2 DS | 7.0 | THQ | 226 | E |

Flame Demon

## CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN

With Castlevania: Order of Ecclesia on the horizon, I decided to revisit Konami's previous Gothic adventure. What I discovered is that while Portrait of Ruin looks and plays great, I felt cheated by the second half of the game, which recycles the environments from the brilliant first half. Hopefully Ecclesia's world map and distinct areas will provide better variety! —**CHRIS H.**

## ARKANOID DS

*This arcade classic is a perfect fit for the DS's two screens, and is nice to zone out with during short pick-up-and-play sessions. It isn't for everyone, but in my opinion, it's better than our 6.5 score suggests.*

—**CHRIS SL.**

The King's Own Swordsman
Elite Horseman
Press B to end turn
200 B.C.

## CIVILIZATION REVOLUTION

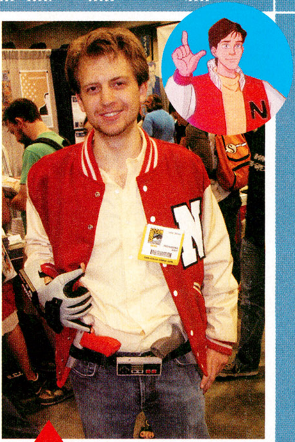
I've never been the biggest fan of the Civilization series, mostly because it was too slow for my tastes. Though Revolution's smaller maps mean you'll encounter your opponents sooner, they also give the game a more fast-paced feel, making them perfect for someone like me. Even if old Civ games weren't your thing, give Revolution a try—you might be surprised. —**TOM H.**

COSPLAY

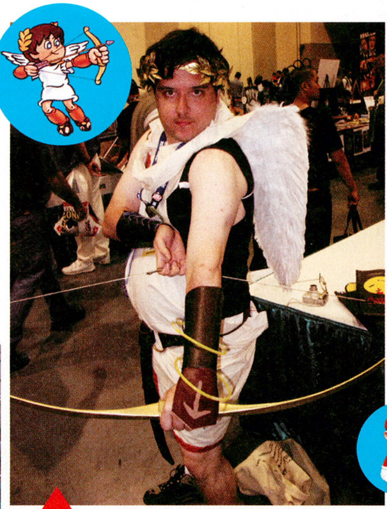
# Dress to Impress

Nintendo fans show their colors at this year's San Diego Comic-Con.

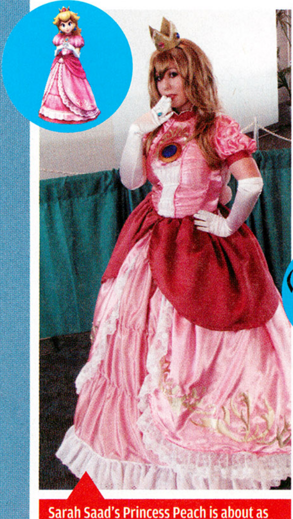
**For those who don't know,** San Diego Comic-Con is *the* biggest comic-book convention in the world. As such, it attracts all kinds of fans, many of whom are dedicated enough to display their fanaticism by dressing up as their favorite comic-book, movie, TV, or video-game characters. So while there were an unsurprisingly high number of Jokers and Naruto ninjas and stormtroopers this year, there was also a strong contingent of cosplaying Nintendo fans. Here are some of the best costumes we saw, with comparisons to their inspirations. —JUSTIN C.



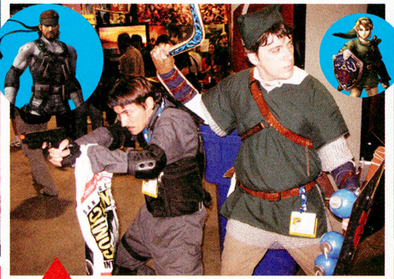
Ah, Captain N, how we miss thee. Well, not really, but some of us—including Lyman Johnson here—have fond memories of the Game Master's adventures. We especially like the fact that Lyman is wearing a Power Glove. It's so bad (in a good way).



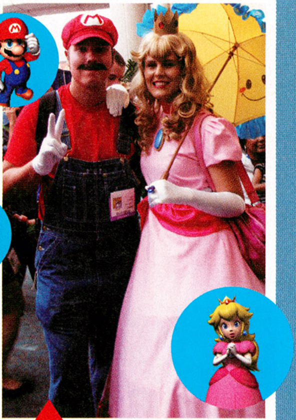
Brook Kuhn is definitely in character as Pit. But with so much attention to detail to his costume, what's up with his footwear?



Sarah Saad's Princess Peach is about as close to the original as you can get. It's the little details, such as the ruffles and the pattern on her dress, that really make Sarah's cosplay stand out.



Austin Hagerman (Snake) and Zachary Lytle (Link) were certainly ready for any brawls that may have broken out. We have to give points for all of the accoutrements on Zachary's costume, but maybe Austin should drop his bag next time.



Kyle Wlodyga and Jennifer Renda stopped crowds with their Mario and Peach costumes. Before you complain about their short sleeves, remember that they may be inspired by Super Mario Sunshine's Mario and Peach. (And it's hot in San Diego!)

# ABOVE *and* BEYOND

Art, cosplay, case mods—if you've got it, we want it. Send your pictures via email to community@nintendopower.com or via snail mail to Community c/o Future US, 1000 Marina Blvd., Suite 510, Brisbane, CA 94005. We'll run the best stuff in this section.

MOD JOB

## Who Needs R.O.B.?

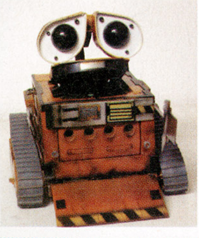
Pixar's robotic protagonist WALL-E comes to life as a case mod.

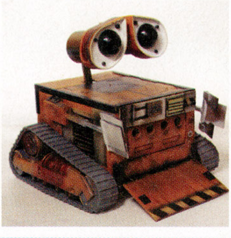
**Disney/Pixar's WALL-E** has many things in common with Nintendo's GameCube console—both are adorably compact, durable, and arguably outmoded by more-advanced technology—but we never expected them to be one and the same.

Luckily, brothers Martin and Stefan Blass of Cologne, Germany-based Babetech Custom Computer and Gaming Consoles had the bright idea of modifying an old GameCube to look like the diminutive animated hero after they saw a trailer for the film earlier this year. "When we saw the teaser for the first time, we just fell in love with this cute little robot," says Martin. "There was no long discussion—just the quick decision that we wanted to build something like that." The duo began putting together the WALL-E case mod in January, plugging about 30 hours into the project before it was completed. As you can see from the images, the project required quite a bit more than just old hardware and a few tubes of paint—the brothers had to draw from several unique sources to find the materials needed for WALL-E's trademark eyes, treads, and hands.

Building the eyes proved to be a multistep process, starting with a wood base surrounded by a strip of PVC and topped with airbrushed acrylic half-spheres and small Plexiglas tubes. The arms and hands may look like metal, but they are actually composed entirely of Plexiglas and assembled in a way that allows both the arms to move and the hands to be opened and closed. Only the treads were lifted directly from another object: a plastic toy bulldozer. Despite the complexity of the modifications, the GameCube remains fully functional, as the lid can be popped like normal and WALL-E's nameplate can be flipped down to reveal the controller ports. "That is always the most important thing," Martin recognizes. "We don't want to destroy anything, just improve it and make it better."

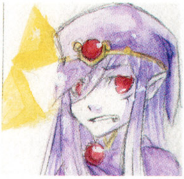
Martin says the brothers have several other projects currently in the works, including a handful of PC mods, but WALL-E is unlikely to be the last console mod to come out of the Babetech crew. "We're currently in the planning/discussion phase for another console mod. This time we want to mod a Wii," asserts Martin. "Our WALL-E needs a girlfriend." **—ANDREW H.**





FAN ART

## Show Us the Love



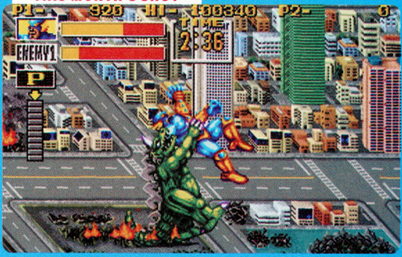
**Reader Kelsey Garlock,** whose dream has been "to draw something that would appear in your magazine," sent us a letter full of love and some fantastic fan art, which we're happy to present here. We're especially impressed with her picture of The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap's Vaati. Keep up the good work, Kelsey, and thanks for reading! **—TOM H.**

WRITE YOUR OWN CAPTION

## Screen Test

**Wha happened?** Everyone was psyched about Indy, and then... nothing. At least readers seemed to like Volume 231's LEGO Indiana Jones screenshot. This month, we're kicking it old-school. (Now *that's* something to get excited about.) Become the king (or queen) of the readers by sending a caption to **screentest@futureus.com.**

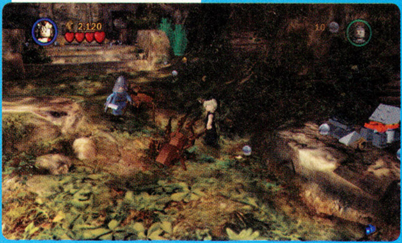
THIS MONTH'S SHOT



"See what happens when you don't chew your humans slowly?"

**HERE'S OUR CAPTION.**
Think you can do better?

VOLUME 231'S SHOT



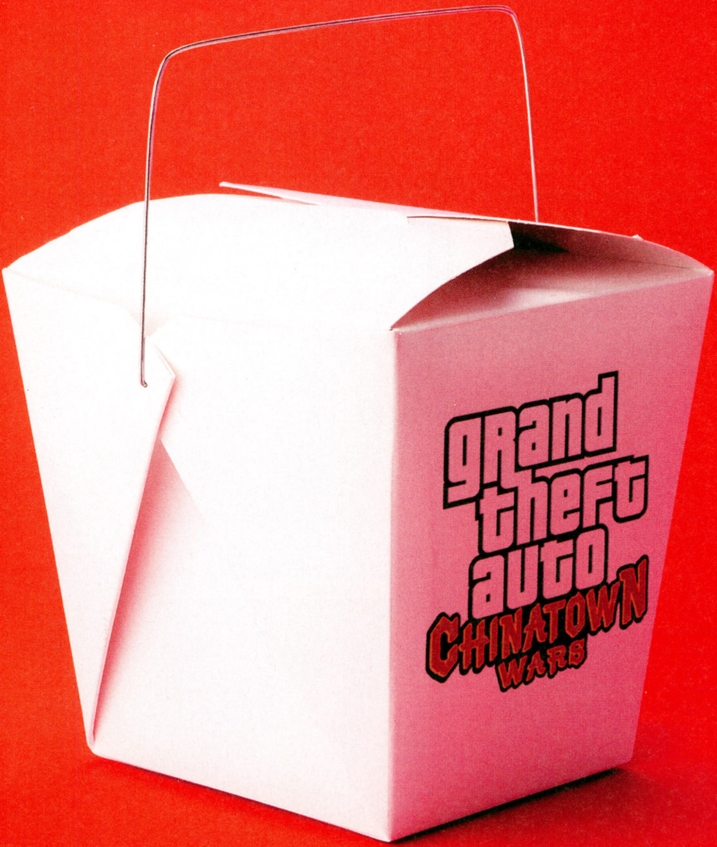
"It could be worse—at least there's no LEGO Jar Jar Binks." **—ERIC N.**

"With its dark environments and terrifying enemies, LEGO Resident Evil completely scared away its target audience and flopped." **—NATHAN S.**

"Kali Ma! Kali Ma! ...Hey, do you know where the heart is on this thing?" **—FEDGIEWEDGIE**

# NEXT MONTH

In true Nintendo Power fashion, next issue's cover game is a doozy of an exclusive. We don't want to let the cat out of the bag, but.... Well, okay—here's a hint: somewhere on this page is a clue. Can you crack our code?



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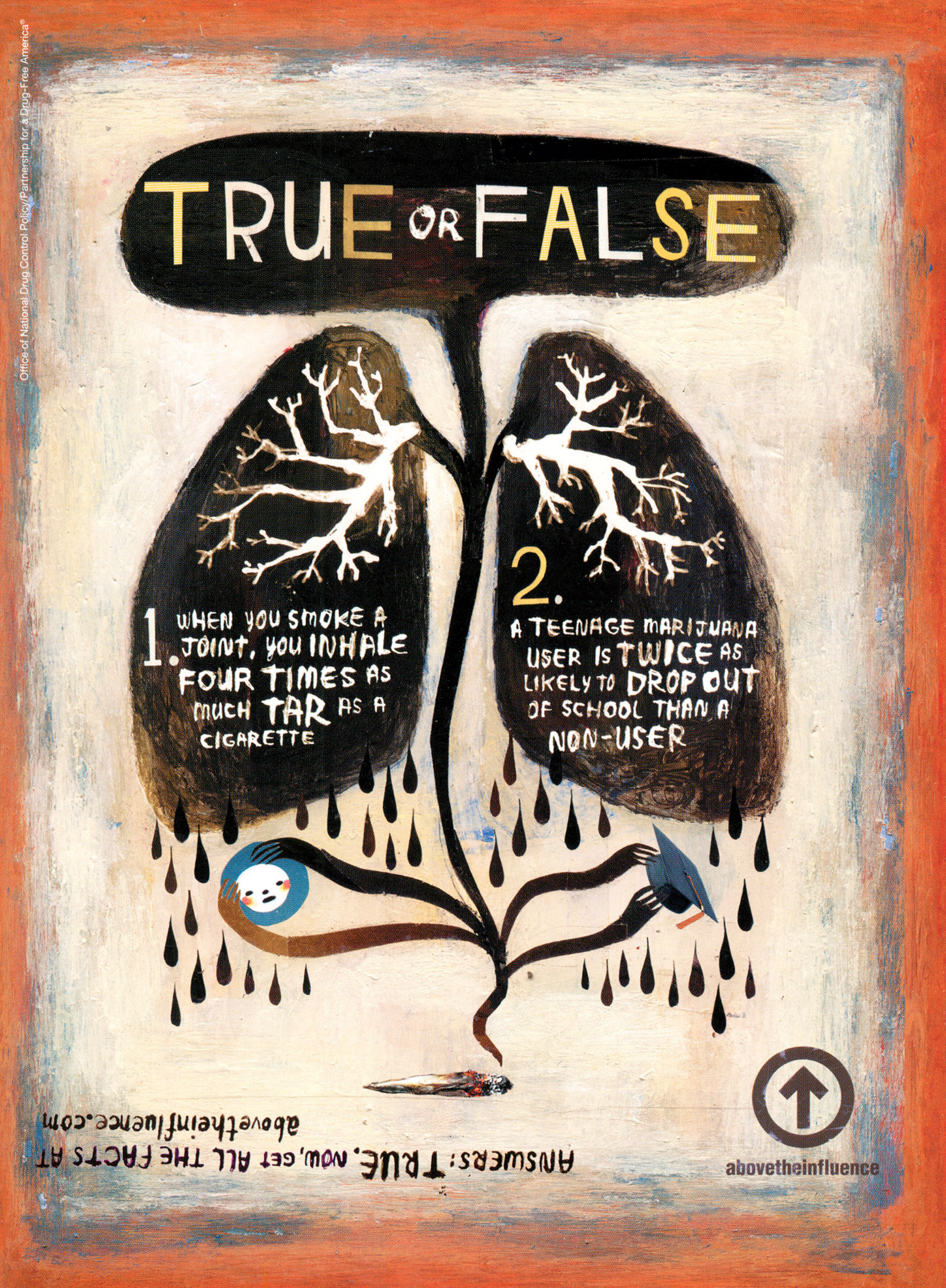
TRUE OR FALSE
1. WHEN YOU SMOKE A JOINT, YOU INHALE FOUR TIMES AS MUCH TAR AS A CIGARETTE
2. A TEENAGE MARIJUANA USER IS TWICE AS LIKELY TO DROP OUT OF SCHOOL THAN A NON-USER
ANSWERS: TRUE, NOW, GET ALL THE FACTS AT abovetheinfluence.com

abovetheinfluence

THERE GOES THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

NORMAL
YEAH!
DANCE

**WELCOME TO THE ULTIMATE PARTY HOUSE: YOURS.**

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